



Knowledge and attitudes of children, youth and parents towards small arms in Montenegro (participatory research)



SEESAC

South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse
for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons



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Acknowledgements

This research was commissioned by SEESAC Education Consultant Marianne Wiseman and conducted by NGO Psychology Studio with Ljiljana Krkeljić, a Specialist in Clinical Psychology and acting as Head of the research team, as well as social worker Dijana Gavranović – Popović, and pedagogue Radoje Novović as focus group facilitators. The participation of the schools, students and parents in this research is highly appreciated. This report was edited by SEESAC Awareness Officer Anya Hart Dyke and graphic design and layout was conducted by Katarina Stankovic-Bjegovic. Photographs are courtesy of UNDP BiH and SEESAC.

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ISBN: 86-7728-047-2

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Foreword

This research on the impact of small arms¹ on children and young people in Montenegro was commissioned by the Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Education (Curriculum) component of the EU Western Balkans SALW Control Support Plan 2006 project implemented by the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of SALW (SEESAC). One of the first requirements of any attempt to develop educational responses to social issues is obtaining quality data. In the case of small arms, this means data on; 1) the impact of small arms on children and young people, in terms of statistics on crime (homicides, assaults, armed robbery), where young people may be victims or perpetrators; 2) public health data (accidental deaths and injuries, suicides); 3) information about attitudes and perceptions of small arms on the part of children and their parents and teachers; and 4) broader data on violence in society and its impact on children.

The 2004 SALW Survey of Montenegro, 'A house isn't a home without a gun', indicated that there was little or no data available relating to children and young people. The crime statistics reporting on assaults used the age category 15 - 29, a standard category in such reporting, but one that is not helpful for programming for children, defined as from birth to 18 years of age. The survey showed that people aged 15 - 29 and 30 - 44, mostly males, were the main victims and perpetrators of armed assaults. Meetings held by the SEESAC Education Consultant, with UNICEF and Dr. Anđa Backović confirmed this lack of data on children and small arms, and therefore the impossibility of developing any appropriate educational responses.

The broader context of the impact of small arms on children is violence in society. UNICEF has recently initiated a survey on bullying in schools, as part of the UN Study on Violence against Children that was released by the UN in New York on 11 October 2006. The study in Montenegro found that there was a discrepancy between children's perceptions and experiences of bullying in schools and that of parents and teachers, who did not view it as seriously, and were seen by children as insufficiently responsive to the problem.

The decision to commission two small pieces of research was made in this context of attempts to raise community awareness of the number of weapons in Montenegro, and the need to control civilian access to these weapons, as well as to identify the extent of violence in schools. The first report researched the availability of data on the impact of small arms on children and young people.² This second piece of research is a participatory study of the attitudes and perceptions of children and their parents to weapons in society.

It is hoped that this research, conducted by an experienced clinical psychologist with extensive field experience, including work on the UNICEF 'Schools without Violence' programme, will contribute to raising awareness about a child's right to grow up in safety and security, to attend schools without violence and to live in a community where guns are seen as enablers of security in the hands of the relevant authorities and not as enablers of violence. It is also hoped that other countries in the region will consider initiating such research and developing ongoing mechanisms for gathering data relevant to the safety of children and young people.

¹ SEESAC uses the term SALW (Small Arms and Light Weapons) which is defined as 'all lethal conventional munitions that can be carried by an individual combatant or a light vehicle, that also do not require a substantial logistic and maintenance capability' (RMDS/G 02.10 - Glossary 4th Edition. For the general reader, perhaps an educator or NGO staff involved in policy development on children's issues, the term SALW (Small Arms and Light Weapons) is unnecessarily technical and confusing. Light weapons are not relevant to the issues of children and youth, except in relation to armed conflict and its impact. Many sources referring to children use the term 'small arms, or 'guns', 'weapons', and 'firearms' interchangeably. So for the purposes of this report the term 'small arms' will be used to refer to 'weapons designed for individual use. They include, *inter alia*, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns' which is the definition used by the United Nations. In the Education section of the SEESAC web site, the term 'small arms' is used in preference to SALW.

² *Children and weapons in Montenegro - A review of data and research*, SEESAC, 2006, <http://www.seesac.org>.



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Knowledge and attitudes of children, youth and parents towards small arms in Montenegro (participatory research)

1 Introduction

According to the Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Survey of Montenegro¹ there are between 168,000 and 246,000 SALW in Montenegro and between 126,000 and 175,000 in civilian possession. This means there is one weapon per household. Small arms, especially pistols, are the primary tool of violent or criminal activities in Montenegro. Research showing a comprehensive view on arms and their significance in Montenegrin society has not yet been done, but it is estimated that during 2003 85% of crimes in Montenegro were committed with firearms. Firearms are misused primarily by young people during the night, in bar fights, at celebrations or for suicide. The first phase of this research showed that a high number of young people were involved in firearm accidents. During the course of 2003, 32 children were involved in accidents involving firearms and in 91% of cases the actors were boys.² The most serious crimes occurred in equal proportion between adults and young people and between young people. Children aged 15 to 18 were the most affected.

Young people throughout Montenegro have come into contact with weapons, and accidents involving children and young people have also occurred throughout the country with the highest rate of accidents being in the largest city of Podgorica. Over the last ten years, 30 young people who committed serious crimes have been imprisoned at the Criminal Sanctions Institute in Spuz, near Podgorica. According to the data obtained from this Institute, in 50% of cases crimes were committed with cold weapons, in 39% of cases with firearms and in 11% of cases with tools.

1.1 Perceptions of the role arms play in society

The SALW Survey on the role of small arms in society revealed that despite the fact that 84% of all household respondents believe that there are too many guns in Montenegro and 37.8% believe that guns are dangerous, approximately the same number of respondents (37.5%) admits that they would own a gun legally if given the opportunity. This very contradictory data confirms the assumption that guns are of special importance in Montenegro's value system.

1.2 Reasons for firearm ownership

Data taken from the above-mentioned SALW Survey shows that Montenegrin citizens identify self-protection and protection of the family as the primary reason for firearms ownership (43.8%), followed by protection of property (15.2%), sports shooting (10.1%), hunting (8.2%), 'because a lot of people have guns' (5.6%), having a dangerous profession (4.2%), contribution to the overall security of the community (3.4%), and finally for political reasons (1.2%). A number of respondents (2.2%) were unable to comment on why they would choose to own a weapon, while 3.4% of respondents refused to answer this question.

Some of the focus group discussions (seven groups in seven towns of Montenegro), further revealed primary motivations behind firearm ownership in Montenegro³. A total of six different factors were identified as reasons why Montenegrin citizens choose to possess guns:

- The cultural tradition of the Montenegrin people, i.e. the perception that Montenegrins are 'devoted to weapons' was identified as one of the primary reasons for weapon ownership and appears to apply across the generations. In Montenegro weapons symbolize their history, their manhood, courage etc, and many believe that this is still one of the primary reasons for gun ownership;

¹ 'A house isn't a home without a gun', SALW Survey of Montenegro, SEESAC, 2004. <http://www.seesac.org>.

² Small Arms Survey – texts published in the daily paper 'Vijesti' in 2003 – Aleksandar Pajević, Montenegrin Media Institute.

³ See *Children and weapons in Montenegro - A review of data and research*, SEESAC 2006, available from <http://www.seesac.org/reports/Montenegro%20Report%20-%20English%20version.pdf>



- The wars that took place in neighbouring countries, namely on the territory of former-Yugoslavia, directly contributed to the large quantities of weapons present in Montenegro today, and regional wars created feelings of “*vulnerability and fear*” in the population, which prompted them to obtain guns, both legally and illegally;
- Weapons have either been distributed by political parties or by the Government and although political tensions have eased, citizens are still reluctant to relinquish weapons until they are “*convinced that these tensions are not a threat to their personal safety any more*”;
- Feelings of insecurity have caused many citizens to obtain weapons for personal security at both work and at home, especially since traditional social and moral values have changed as a result of numerous regional conflicts and increased levels of crime;
- The impact that mass media has had on Montenegrin society, especially upon the youth by conveying “*western cultural images that weapons can be status symbols and can make young men into tough guys*” is relatively new, but in the opinion of focus groups participants, this has contributed to widespread possession of weapons by young people; and
- A final reason for weapons acquisition is for those who are motivated by the “*seductive profits of the arms trade in Montenegro*”. Participants from the border areas of Montenegro particularly identified with this motivation.

1.4 Socialization and attitude development

Attitudes can be defined as “acquired, relatively permanent and stable organization of positive and negative emotions, values and reactions as regards an object”,⁴ with three interconnected components: cognitive (learning); emotional; and proactive (action) component. Attitudes are formed during the socialization process, or else in the process of social development, based on experiences gained either directly, or indirectly from information sources available (i.e. the social environment). In this learning process the important factors are cultural, parental (familial) and the peer group, as well as personal characteristics.⁵

The presence of arms in Montenegrin society allows for different experiences with weapons for adults, young people and children. Such personal experiences have a powerful influence on shaping attitudes towards, and personal associations with weapons. The continued presence of weapons and their use has undoubtedly influenced traditional Montenegrin values whereby weapons have a special significance, as well as current values that have been generated by role models who use weapons for various purposes. Attitudes in turn account for motivations for arms possession, and behaviour can to a certain degree be predicted on the basis on certain attitudes.

⁴ Petz, 1992.

⁵ Krech & Crutchild, 1964.

2 Participatory research

2.1 Background to the research

The report *Children and weapons in Montenegro - A review of data and research* published by SEESAC in July 2006 covers available data on the influence of small arms on children and young people, and serves as a starting point in assisting the education system in Montenegro to recognize the extent of the problem and take responsibility for addressing this issue. This data is also of use to the public health sector, and covers criminal statistics (murders, attacks and armed robberies in which young people were the victims or the perpetrators), as well as data on non-criminal activities in which children and young people were the victims of firearms misuse.

This present report covering participatory research with children and parents to determine their attitudes towards arms is the follow-up, and an attempt to raise awareness on the importance of SALW control in Montenegro.

In 2005 research on school violence in Montenegro was initiated for the first time (on attitudes of children, teachers and parents towards violence), and then a response programme was implemented in early 2006 in which the entire school dealt with the issue of peer school violence. 'Schools without violence – towards a safer and stimulating environment for children' was carried out by UNICEF to raise awareness on the importance of addressing violence in general, and peer violence in schools in particular in order to build a functional children protection network and make the school and its surroundings a safer place for child development. Currently this Pilot Project 'Schools without violence – towards a safer and stimulating environment for children' is being implemented in two elementary schools.

In the context of the work on violence in schools, and given the number of arms in Montenegrin homes, the attention of both the public and of the education authorities as well as other child protection systems must be drawn to the issue of children and weapons in order to organize and conduct coordinated child protection activities.

2.2 Description of the project

2.2.1 Objectives

- Establish the importance of arms in the everyday life of young people and their parents; and
- Estimate the needs of a potential prevention programme.

2.2.2 Methodology of research

The following methods were used in the research:

Questionnaire:

- A short, anonymous questionnaire on the attitudes of children, young people and parents towards arms possession and use;
- Evaluation questionnaires for all focus group participants;
- Questionnaire for the facilitator and co-facilitator of the focus groups; and
- General observation form for the schools that were selected for the research.

Focus groups:

- Discussion on the basis of pre-prepared key questions.

Instructions for schools on the research goals and criteria for setting-up focus groups were identical for all schools, and the school management and their counselling department selected participants according to the following criteria:



- Twelve participants in each group; and
- Ensuring a gender balance.

All schools sent written notice to parents about the research, stating its goals and the importance of parental participation. The questionnaires and focus group discussions were overseen and moderated by the facilitator and co-facilitator, who were engaged as mentors in the aforementioned project 'Schools without violence', and had experience in leading focus groups.

2.2.3 Target groups

- Children aged 13 - 15 (7th and 8th grades);
- Young people aged 15 - 18 (in high school);
- Parents of elementary school children; and
- Parents of high school children.

2.2.4 Target schools

In each school two focus groups were conducted: one with school children and the other with parents.

SCHOOLS				
PLACE	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	REASON FOR SELECTION OF THE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOLS	REASON FOR SELECTION OF THE SCHOOL
Podgorica	Božidar Vuković – Podgoričanin Pavle Rovinski ⁶	Suburban – multicultural and multi-confessional environment.		
Cetinje			High school	City with the highest rate of armed assaults.
Nikšić			Technical School of Mechanics	City with most frequent crimes committed by underage persons.

Table 1: Schools selected for participatory research

2.3 Research Plan

PLANNED ACTIVITIES	AUGUST 2006	SEPTEMBER 2006	OCTOBER 2006
Preparation of the research (material and methodology).	x		
Identification of focus group facilitator and co-facilitator and his/her preparation for the implementation of the research.		By 10-09-2006	
Identification of the schools and establishing contact with them. Preparation of the mentor for the implementation of the research.		By 15-09-2006	
Conducting research in schools. ⁷ Collection of material: reports from focus groups. Collection of feedback from the facilitator. Collection of evaluation questionnaires from the participants.		From 25-09-2006	By 05-10-2006
Data processing and report writing.			06-10-2006 – 03-11-2006

Table 2: Planned implementation phases of the participatory research

⁶ This school was later included in the research after three unsuccessful attempts to get the parents together. The school Pavle Rovinski is located near the school Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin.

⁷ This phase was implemented with some delay due to the late arrival of the letter to the Ministry of Education and Science. The consent of the Ministry was obtained instantaneously.

3 Results of the participatory research

3.1 Focus group 1 – Children aged 13 - 15 (B. V. Podgoričanin)

As Table 3 illustrates, the number of students, as well as their gender, corresponds to the research criteria but the age criterion has not been fully met, as there are four children aged 12 in the group although all children are from grades VII and VIII.

SEX	AGE			TOTAL
	12	13	14	
Female	2	3	1	6
Male	2	1	3	6
TOTAL	4	4	4	12

Table 3: Focus group 1 (B. V. Podgoričanin)

The school has enrolled children of various nationalities and confessions, and the selected group reflects this diversity although the sample was selected randomly. There were three Montenegrins, six Serbs, two Muslims and one Albanian.

Have you ever possessed or carried a weapon?

POSSESSION / CARRYING	SEX				TOTAL
	F		M		
	YES	NO	YES	NO	
Possession		6	1	5	12
Carrying		6		6	12
TOTAL		12	1	11	12

Table 4: Experience of possession and carrying of a weapon

Can young people, in your opinion, have (possess) a weapon?

	SEX		TOTAL
	F	M	
Yes	1		1
No	4	6	10
Unknown	1		1
TOTAL	6	6	12

Table 5: Opinions on young people possessing arms

Have you ever been endangered by a weapon?

TYPE OF EXPOSURE	SEX				TOTAL
	F		M		
	YES	NO	YES	NO	
Use of a weapon by another person		6		6	12
Personal use of a weapon		6		6	12
TOTAL		12		12	24

Table 6: Exposure to danger of weapon use



Has anyone from your neighbourhood been the victim of small arms misuse in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	2	2	4
No	4	4	8
TOTAL	6	6	12

Table 7: Knowledge of victims of firearms misuse in your neighbourhood in the last six months

Have you talked to anybody about weapons in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	2	4	6
No	4	2	6
TOTAL	6	6	12

Table 8: Discussions about weapons in the last six months

With whom and on what occasions do you talk about weapons?

RESPONSE	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Only from time to time / occasionally.	1	1	2
With peers.		1	1
With someone they can get advice from.	1	3	4
TOTAL	1	5	7

Table 9: Situations in which students talk about weapons

What do you think about the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE when it comes to civilian arms possession?

- *"In my opinion, as a 14 year old, Montenegro needs more modern security. Not only Montenegro, but also other countries in the region cannot be compared to a much safer America.*
- *I think it is meaningless that a republic as small as Montenegro should be the most heavily armed country in SEE.*
- *I was really surprised by the fact that such a small state can have so many weapons.*
- *The police should be more active in combating crime and they should arrest all illegal arms traders, so that weapons are more difficult to obtain.*
- *I did not know that and I was very surprised to hear that. Still, in spite of so many weapons I don't hear about heavy gunfights here as I do for instance in Iraq and Palestine, and other bigger countries.*
- *Well, maybe the reasons for using a weapon could be revenge, theft or some other motives.*
- *I think there's no need for so many guns. There are always dangers, but still we should not carry guns because this increases the risks.*
- *In view of the small number of people living in Montenegro, it is not significant if we are the most heavily armed country in SEE.*
- *With so many murders and assaults, this is to be expected. We should have some prevention measures, because given the fact that there are such a small number of citizens, this is really horrible.*

- *I think there's no need for so many guns, and that they should not be carried around. With so many guns the risks are even greater.*
- *I think that although each family possesses arms, this is not because of any threat, for there are people who own weapons for tradition or other personal reasons, so we cannot say that there are weapons in Montenegro because danger is lurking.*
- *I think that citizen safety must be poor, if we have so many weapons. I think that the police will have to put more effort into performing its duties in a more professional and effective way, and then we would not have problems."*

How do you feel about the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE when it comes to arms in civilian possession?

- *"We need better security and stricter legislation;*
- *I feel very bad about this.*
- *In view of this fact I got a little scared and I saw that until now I had felt safe, but now that I know this, I will have to be more cautious and take more care.*
- *I do not feel very safe due to the fact that we rank second according to the number of citizens who possess arms.*
- *I get angry about this because peoples' lives are put at stake. This is unjust on a national level.*
- *Well, I may feel safe but knowing that there are so many weapons doesn't make me happy.*
- *I feel confused, for I can't believe that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE.*
- *It is not pleasant to learn that your country is the most heavily armed country in SEE. I feel threatened and will feel like that until this is resolved.*
- *I do not feel really safe in my country.*
- *I feel very threatened because there are people who cannot handle weapons properly, so accidents can happen.*
- *I feel threatened because I am sure that most people cannot handle weapons properly, and people are impatient and think too quickly."*

The fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed state in SEE when it comes to arms in civilian possession was received with mostly 'bad' feelings. The children said this fact worries them, scares them, and that because of it they do not feel safe or secure, that they feel threatened and that this fact does not make them happy. Only one child said he feels stable and secure.

3.1.1 Summary of findings

According to the information obtained from the questionnaire, in this group of 12 children:

- One child has held or carried a weapon.
- One girl responded positively to the question: Can young people, in your opinion, have (possess) a weapon?
- None of the children have ever been in danger because either they themselves or somebody else was handling a weapon.
- According to four children, the use of weapons in the children's immediate surroundings resulted in accidents over the last six months.
- According to six of the children, they do talk about weapons.



In the children's opinion (according to the Evaluation Sheet), the majority thought that the focus group atmosphere was stimulating and that they felt free to express themselves. Interaction between the group members and communication with the group moderators was pleasant and relaxed. Children evaluated topics for discussion as interesting. One child wrote: *"It was really cool, fluent conversation and good story"*. Only one boy wrote that he had *"stage fright because of the topic of the discussion"*. In terms of how the group discussion was structured, children mainly stated that *"everything was done as it should be"*, but that *"some children may not have said everything they'd wanted"*, and one child thought that this topic should be discussed with far more children. For most children the most appealing topic was *"What motivates young people to carry weapons?"* and children were also interested to learn *"how we can prevent use of arms and introduce prevention measures for all children"*. From the point of view of the facilitator and co-facilitator *"children were interested, free, spontaneous, active, very motivated to participate in the group discussion"* and the *"atmosphere was great for a discussion on this subject matter. Conversation and exchange of opinion were such that one could say that children were very interested in discussing and in this topic"*.

3.1.2 Analysis of key discussion questions

Should young people own weapons?

Discussion about this resulted in clear statements that there are no reasons for which young people should be allowed to possess weapons because *"weapons are dangerous"*, because of *"immaturity and quick thinking"*, because children *"cannot handle"* weapons, *"they can become criminals and end up in jail"*, and because *"someone may use it as a joke, and consequences can be disastrous"*.

Do you think that adults have any reasons to possess a weapon in their homes?

Apart from comments that weapons should only be carried by officials (police and other security personnel), children's responses to this question can be divided into two groups – Group A and Group B. Group A states that adults can hold a weapon provided that:

- *"It is legal, that they hide it from children and that they can handle it properly."*
- *That they use it in self-defence.*
- *If there is lots of crime or a war, but not here.*
- *In rural areas, yes, where there are vendettas.*
- *There is a selection of households that may have a weapon.*
- *Yes, if it is necessary and if they can handle it properly.*
- *If there is violence in the town.*
- *Yes, because this is tradition.*
- *If there exists a pistol that can only render you unconscious."*

Group B states that adults should not have weapons because:

- *"We should communicate in a more intelligent way, resolve conflicts in the court. I would replace weapons with kind words. Weapons can only be held by hunters and sportsmen."*
- *Neither young people nor adults because some circumstances can provoke somebody to kill his friend."*

Should young people be carrying weapons?

In the opinion of Group B, young people should carry weapons if they are sportsmen (sports shooting) or hunters. And also, if:



- *"Somebody is bullying me and my family.*
- *If I wanted to avenge somebody.*
- *Yes, in the woods.*
- *If they abduct children".*

The other children thought that young people should not be carrying weapons.

Should adults be carrying weapons?

A couple of comments indicated that children condone adults carrying weapons, namely when:

- *"A member of the family is violent.*
- *They have had a row and now they are scared.*
- *They like it, but there is no need for it as there is no war and vendetta. We can live in peace.*
- *They live in the countryside".*

But all of the girls and most of the boys were against carrying weapons.

What can motivate young people to use guns?

Children most often state that one of the primary motivations for using a weapon is the need to belong to a group and in turn the influence the group in persuading them to use one. An indicator of this trend is that revenge was identified as a significant motivation for possible use of guns by young people, and in some other comments vendettas are also mentioned a motivation, then a loss of control (drugs, mental disorder) and suicide (*"last year in Plav a girl shot herself with a rifle"*, *"there are people for whom life has become boring"*).

What can motivate adults to use guns?

The children listed the following socio-pathological behaviours as motivations for adults to use weapons:

- *"When he gets drunk; when he's under the influence of drugs.*
- *On Kakaritska gora a man killed his daughter because of her boyfriend, she was a student in our school, this shouldn't have happened.⁸*
- *In order to protect his child from drugs, e.g. someone is offering drugs to the child, and the parent kills the drug dealer.*
- *Children have a fight at school, a parent comes and hits someone's child, his father gets angry and a gunfight ensues.*
- *A mental disorder.*
- *He can kill someone during a celebration.*
- *A child breaks his arm at an excursion, and the parent attacks the teacher.*
- *Thefts and robberies".*

⁸ This was a real incident: a father killed his daughter, who was a student at the elementary school B:V: Podgoričanin more than a year ago. The motive for the murder indicated by the children is also true. I do not have the information about the results of court proceedings in this case.



3.1.3 Group discussion summary

Attitudes towards children and weapons:

- **Weapons possession:** children should not possess weapons, firearms possession is dangerous and children feel afraid, threatened, anxious, insecure and tense when thinking about weapons.
- **Carrying weapons:** some children can find reasons and situations that justify the carrying of a weapon (not including sports shooting).
- **Use of weapons:** children list a number situations that show a positive attitude towards using a weapon, or else situations in which in their opinion, it is possible to use a weapon, namely: under group influence; for revenge (vendetta); when experiencing a loss of self-control; and for suicide.

Paradoxically, some children hold positive attitudes towards weapons use but not towards weapons possession or carrying. If we look at the group's attitude towards weapons on the whole, we can make the following assumptions:

- **Knowledge:** there is a perception that weapons are dangerous and should not be possessed.
- **Emotion:** "bad" feelings about guns are in accordance with knowledge about weapons and their consequences.
- **Behaviour:** knowledge about the dangers weapons pose as well as related feelings are not in accordance with behaviour, as the use of weapons is found to be acceptable if a child finds himself in specific circumstances: under group influence; in a need of revenge; or if he/she loses control over himself/herself.

Children's attitudes towards adults and weapons:

- **Weapons possession:** children state reasons for and against adults owning weapons.
- **Carrying of weapons:** gender differences are noticeable. Girls think adults should not carry weapons but boys find reasons for which they can / should.
- **Use of weapons:** most children identify socio-pathological behaviour behind the use of a weapon.

Children's attitudes towards weapons possession, carrying and their use by adults are somewhat less clear than those towards weapons possession, carrying and their use by children.

3.2 Focus group 2 - Parents of elementary schoolchildren (Pavle Rovinski - Podgorica)

Table 10 shows that the group consisted of 11 parents, aged from 33 to 52. Most parents were aged 41 to 50 and the group was gender balanced. All parents live in the immediate surroundings of the school – in Podgorica and all the parents from the group are married. Additional data on education, employment and nationality can be found in Annex B.

SEX	AGE			TOTAL
	30 – 40	41 – 50	51 – 60	
Female	3	1	1	5
Male		5	1	6
TOTAL	3	6	2	11

Table 10: Focus group 2 – parents (Pavle Rovinski)



Have you ever possessed or carried a weapon?

POSSESSION / CARRYING	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Possession		5	4	2		11
Carrying		5	2	3	1	11

Table 11: Experience of possession and carrying of a weapon

Should young people have (possess) weapons?

	SEX		TOTAL
	F	M	
Yes		1	1
No	5	5	10
TOTAL	5	6	11

Table 12: Should young people have (possess) weapons?

Have you been endangered by a weapon in the last six months?

TYPE OF EXPOSURE	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Use of a weapon by somebody else		5		6		11
Personal use of a weapon		5		3	3	11

Table 13: Have you been endangered by a weapon in the last 6 months?

Has anybody from your neighbourhood been the victim of firearms use in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	1	1	2
No	5	4	9
TOTAL	6	6	11

Table 14: Knowledge about firearms victims in the neighbourhood in the last six months

Have you talked with your children about weapons in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	4	4	8
No	2	1	3
TOTAL	6	5	11

Table 15: Do you talk about weapons with your children?



What do you think about the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE when it comes to civilian arms possession?

- *"This is a devastating fact, given the size of our country.*
- *The fact is alarming.*
- *This is a bad habit that should be corrected for the sake of future generations.*
- *Unfortunately, this is true and it will remain so until state institutions become more functional.*
- *This is devastating.*
- *I'm surprised.*
- *A special law should regulate weapons possession.*
- *I'm disappointed and worried. This is a shocking fact."*

All the parents were clearly surprised to learn that the present number of weapons in civilian possession is a big threat, and thought that it should be reduced, within the framework of existing regulations, and also that traditional attitudes towards weapons should be modified for the benefit of future generations. Their answers were accompanied by dissatisfaction, surprise and speechlessness at the fact that citizens of Montenegro possess so many weapons.

How do you feel about it?

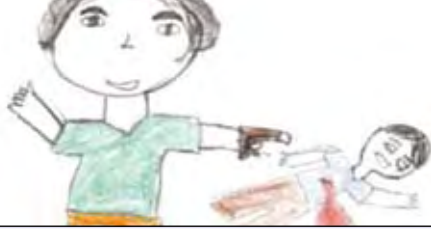
- *"I think what is needed is better implementation of existing legislation and the Ministry of Interior needs to lead voluntary weapons surrenders.*
- *Very insecure, knowing that almost every third person in Montenegro possesses a weapon, and knowing the temperament and mentality of the people.*
- *It is difficult to see and hear about people being murdered and wounded by firearms in real life. I believe we must put an end to it in the near future.*
- *It's as if we were Indians.*
- *Feelings are difficult to describe. I think adult possession and carrying of weapons should be regulated."*

Most people felt confused, sad, worried and surprised and several parents gave suggestions for how to improve the situation.

3.2.1 Summary of findings

- Mothers stated that they neither own nor ever carry weapons, whilst most fathers do own a weapon, and two of stated that they even carry them.
- One father thought that young people should own weapons.
- None of the parents have ever been endangered by a weapon.
- Two parents knew of someone from their neighbourhood that had been the victim of firearms misuse.
- Most mothers and fathers talk about weapons with their children.

Parents stated that they felt free to express their opinions during the group discussion, describing the atmosphere in which the discussion was held as *"pleasant"*, *"very good"*, *"friendly"*, and *"without tensions"*. Parents were proactive in suggesting topics they were interested in (see Annex B) and were *"very interested in the entire discussion"*. The topic that generated the most interest was motivations for young people to carry a weapon. The facilitators stated that parents were afraid that the discussion might *"focus on day-to-day politics"* but they were interested in taking part in anything that concerned their children, while highlighting the lost role of the school in child protection from school violence which means that parents now have to solve peer violence problems



by themselves (to deal directly with child bullies). They also emphasised a lack of interest on the part of most parents in their child's experience at school (few parents attend parent-teacher meetings).

3.2.2 Analysis of key discussion questions

For what reason can you have a weapon at home?

- *"Weapons should not be kept at home" (no explanation).*
- *"Weapons can be kept only by sports shooters (marksmen).*
- *From the point of view of preserving privacy and protecting one's self and one's property - we should possess weapons.*
- *It is possible if the laws on tax also include weapons possession. Special taxes should be imposed on weapons."*

Should young people be carrying weapons?

All parents agreed that *"under no circumstances should children be allowed. When they grow up they will decide for themselves and better times will come when there will be no need for weapons..."*

What can motivate young people to use firearms?

Parents stated a few motivations including *"showing-off, drugs, alcohol, aggressive films, lack of family communication, computer games and so on"*.

What can motivate adults to use firearms?

Parents identified some social circumstances during the period of crisis in Montenegro that may have prompted citizens to use weapons, as well as the fact that the presence (carrying) of firearms reduces the possibilities of finding alternative solutions to conflicts.

3.2.3 Group discussion summary

Parents' attitudes towards children and weapons:

- Only sportsmen and those needing to protect themselves or their property are entitled to own a weapon.
- Young people should not keep weapons at home. (But their comments that children will make up their own minds about gun ownership when they grow up reflect an ambivalent attitude towards the value they place on weapons).
- There is no reason why young people should carry weapons.
- There are several motivations for young people to use firearms – *"to show-off, because of drugs, alcohol, aggressive films, lack of family communication, computer games and so on"*.
- Some social circumstances (namely the crisis) may account for the use of weapons, their presence and availability in society and this reduces the possibility of resolving conflicts in a non-violent way.



3.3 Focus group 3 - Children aged 15 – 18 (School of Mechanics, Nikšić)

In this school there was a group of 10 students with an equal number of boys and girls (Table 16).

SEX	AGE			TOTAL
	15	16	17	
Female	2	1	2	5
Male	1	4		5
TOTAL	3	5	2	10

Table 16: Focus group 3 – sex and age (School of Mechanics, Nikšić)

There are mostly sixteen-year-olds and with the exception of the fourth grade, the group had an equal number of students from other grades.

GRADES				TOTAL
1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	
3	3	3	1	10

Table 17: Focus group 3 - school grades

All students from the group declared themselves as Montenegrins.

Have you ever possessed or carried a weapon?

POSSESSION / CARRYING	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Possession	1	4	2	3		10
Carrying	1	4	2	2	1	10

Table 18: Have you ever possessed or carried a weapon?

Can young people have (possess) guns?

	SEX		TOTAL
	F	M	
Yes	2	2	4
No	3	3	6
TOTAL	5	5	10

Table 19: Can young people have (possess) firearms?

Have you ever been endangered by a weapon?

TYPE OF EXPOSURE	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Use of a weapon by another person	1	4		5		10
Personal use of a weapon		4		4	1	10

Table 20: Have you been endangered by a weapon?

Do you of anybody who has been the victim of firearms misuse in the past six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	3	3	6
No	2	2	4
TOTAL	5	5	10

Table 21: Do you know of anybody who has been a victim in your neighbourhood?

Have you talked about weapons in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	5	4	9
No		1	1
TOTAL	5	5	10

Table 22: Have you talked about weapons with anybody in the last six months?

How often do you talk about weapons and with whom?

RESPONSE	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Only from time to time / occasionally.	1	4	5
With peers.		2	2
With someone they can get advice from.	2	2	4
Unknown.	3		3
TOTAL	6	8	14

Table 23: In which situations do students talk about weapons?

What do you think about the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE when it comes to civilian firearms possession?

- "I think this data should be checked, but still things should be changed: young people shouldn't carry and own weapons, while adults can be allowed to do that.
- I think every household owns a weapon for self-defence or sports shooting.
- I find it strange.
- I think we should work to reduce this number so that weapons are only used by those who have a license, or else for professional use.
- Now we do not need to ask ourselves 'where do young people get weapons from?' as this is the number of registered weapons, never mind unregistered weapons.
- I think there is no reason for a country to possess or acquire so many firearms.
- I learned this information only now and I think we should do something about it.
- I think this is the worst thing that can happen. Why can't we be the first in something nice and interesting, instead of this?"



This focus group was divided into those who are scared by such a high number of weapons in Montenegro and those who think that it reflects the Montenegrin tradition. The first group stated that it is necessary to ban both the possession and carrying of weapons.

How do you feel about it?

- *“Very bad.*
- *I am happy that such an issue has been raised at all.*
- *Awful and I think that people should use firearms as little as possible.*
- *I am not happy.*
- *Bad, as more and more often I hear stories about murders, especially among underage persons, which is horrible!!!*
- *Scared, for this means everybody has one, and that there are aggressive people about.*
- *We must know why such a small country is one of the most heavily armed countries in SEE.*
- *I am shocked for who would say that such a small country is the most heavily armed in SEE.*
- *I feel unsafe in my own state!!”*

Students in this focus group were worried, scared and felt threatened by such a high number of weapons in civilian possession.

3.3.1 Summary of findings

- One girl and two boys wrote they have and carry a weapon.
- 40% of participants responded positively to the question of whether young people should possess weapons.
- A firearm being used by another person had endangered one participant.
- 60% stated that they possess a weapon.
- 50% stated that young people should carry a firearm.
- Almost all participants have talked about weapons in the last six months.

On the basis of the Evaluation Sheet, the children felt free to express their opinions and the atmosphere during the discussion was described as “warm and friendly”, “relaxed”, “pleasant”, “democratic”, “super” and “quite normal”. The topic that attracted the most attention was motivations for firearms use by young people. Participants in this group were interested in some kind of “preventive measures”. The facilitator considered that all participants were interested in the topic and were especially animated by the question ‘Do young people need to carry firearms in their everyday life?’

3.3.2 Analysis of key discussion questions

Should young people own weapons?

Focus group participants stated that they thought that young people should not carry firearms but find peaceful ways to solve conflicts, which is contrary to the details of weapons possession by group members specified in the questionnaire.

Should adults have weapons at home?

- Sports shooting and professional use.

- Personal security.
- For tradition.
- Personal attachment to weapons.

Should young people be carrying weapons?

Although students revealed that young people carry firearms, taking them from parents and showing them off to other children, participants believe that young people should not carry weapons.

Should adults be carrying weapons?

Participants stated that adults should not carry weapons, *“they should make weapons unavailable to children”*.

Why do young people use firearms?

- Peer pressure, showing-off, quarrelling, *“he is more of a man if he has a gun”*.
- Criminal and socially unacceptable behaviour: *“under the influence of alcohol, drugs, for the purpose of robbery, self-defence, revenge”*.
- Suicide committed with guns.

Why do adults use guns?

- *“Revenge, to defend/avenge his sister, a quarrel”* (violent conflict resolution).
- Suicides.
- *“Under the influence of drugs, alcohol, criminal activities (e.g. when somebody needs drugs), to force somebody to do something”* (socially unacceptable and criminal motives).

Attitudes of young people towards children and weapons:

- **Weapons possession:** the prevailing attitude is that young people should not possess weapons but according to the questionnaire, 60% of respondents stated that they have a weapon, 50% said that young people should carry a weapon, and 40% stated that they know of people from their neighbourhood who have been victims of firearms misuse.
- **Carrying firearms:** again another discrepancy between knowing why young people should not carry firearms and corresponding behaviour, since young people do carry firearms.
- **Use of firearms:** young people stated many different reasons why young people may use firearms in spite of their attitude that young people should not possess firearms.

Attitudes of young people towards adults and weapons:

- **Weapons possession:** young people have a realistic attitude towards the professional use of firearms in sports shooting and other professions. But they also give other reasons that justify keeping firearms at home.
- **Carrying weapons:** adults should not carry weapons. Young people implicitly hold adults responsible for the use of firearms by children.
- **Use of firearms:** again, there is a discrepancy between young people's attitudes towards the use of firearms by adults and the circumstances under which adults may use weapons. Of interest is that young people gave similar reasons for why adults use firearms and why young people use them.



3.4 Focus group 4 - Parents (School of Mechanics, Niksic)

The parents ranged from 35 to 47 years of age and the group was mostly made up of women. All parents come from urban areas and they are all married (none are divorced or widowed) and additional data on education, employment and nationality can be found in Annex D.

SEX	AGE		UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	30 – 40	41 – 50		
Female	4	3		7
Male		2	1	3
TOTAL	4	5	1	10

Table 24: Focus group 4 - age and sex

Have you ever carried or owned a weapon?

POSSESSION / CARRYING	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Possession		5	1	4		10
Carrying		5		3	2	10

Table 25: Focus group 4 - experience of possessing and carrying a weapon

Should young people own weapons?

	SEX		TOTAL
	F	M	
Yes			
No	5	5	10
TOTAL	5	6	10

Table 26: Should young people own firearms?

Have you ever been endangered by a weapon?

TYPE OF EXPOSURE	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Use of a weapon by somebody else		7	1	2		10
Personal use of a weapon		7		2	1	10

Table 27: Have you ever been endangered by a weapon?

Do you know of anybody who has been the victim of firearms misuse in the past six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	F	M	
Yes	2	1	3
No	4	3	7
TOTAL	6	4	10

Table 28: Do you know of any firearms victims in your neighbourhood?

Do you talk about weapons?

	SEX		TOTAL
	F	M	
Yes	3	4	7
No	3		3
TOTAL	6	4	10

Table 29: Have you talked about weapons in the last six months?

What do you think about the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE when it comes to civilian arms possession?

- *"This is devastating.*
- *Weapons possession should be banned.*
- *I think this is very bad and that both possession and use of weapons under any circumstances should be banned.*
- *I didn't know that.*
- *This is a bad custom, but I think this is just an excuse for people who like carrying weapons.*
- *Well, this is the people's tradition.*
- *I am not surprised.*
- *This is to be expected.*
- *Yes, I think Montenegro is quite contaminated."*

A few participants said that this is "a devastating fact", that "both possession and use of weapons under any circumstances should be banned" whilst others think that "weapons are part of local tradition", although some are aware that this is "just an excuse for people who like carrying weapons".

How do you feel about it?

- *"Awful, when I think how my children will grow up.*
- *Bad; our young people get killed.*
- *I think this is very bad and dangerous and that all measures should be taken in order to change the situation.*
- *I'm worried.*
- *It's quite simple, we should ban firearms possession and carrying regardless of age and profession.*
- *Quite sad."*

3.4.1 Summary of findings

- One parent from the group has been endangered by a weapon being used by somebody else.
- One third of parents confirmed that someone from their neighbourhood has been the victim of firearms use.
- Two thirds of parents talk about weapons.
- Four parents from the group have weapons and one carries a weapon.



The parents described the discussion as stimulating and stated that they could freely express their opinions and feelings and found the key questions interesting as topics for discussion. The facilitator observed that the group split into two: the women occupied one part and the men the other, while one man was in neither group. The women always waited for men to say their opinion first and one participant took a dominant role, which was accepted by the others. All parents insisted that Nikšić is a specific environment where no one is held accountable for anything (drugs, crime). They also said that Nikšić has the highest juvenile crime rate.

3.4.2 Analysis of key discussion questions

Why should you have a weapon at home?

The focus group was divided into two: the first stated that there is no reason to possess a weapon, and the second that the tradition surrounding weapons should be continued and that they should be held as trophies or for hunting purposes.

Do you think that children and young people should keep a weapon at home?

Children and young people should not be directed towards using weapons and that weapons should be stored beyond the reach of children.

Should young people be carrying weapons?

The parents said that there is no reason why young people should need to carry a weapon. Even professionals shouldn't carry them around.

Why might young people use firearms?

"There is no reason why young people would carry a weapon in their everyday life."

Why might adults use firearms?

- *"The influence of alcohol and drugs, peer influence, male-female relations and the resulting conflicts."*
- *Because the police is lenient towards individuals who openly carry a weapon.*
- *For theft and crime.*
- *Recently because of the influence of politics, i.e. due to the division of Montenegrin society into Serbs and Montenegrins.*
- *Because of vendettas, quarrels, a lack of tolerance and many other reasons".*

3.3.3 Group discussion summary

Parents' attitudes towards children and weapons:

Bearing in mind that this group is mostly female, attitudes are consistent about young people not owning and using weapons, and concerning adult possession and use of weapons, the group gave a very specific list of reasons why adults use weapons, although they view these motivations as socially unacceptable.

3.5 Focus group 5 - Children aged 15-18 (High School, Cetinje)

This is the largest focus group that consists of children aged 14 to 18 with children from all high school grades although with more boys than girls (Table 30).

SEX	AGE					TOTAL
	14	15	16	17	18	
Female	1		2	1	2	6
Male	1	3	1	1	3	9
TOTAL	2	3	3	2	5	15

Table 30: Focus group 5 – sex and age of participants (High School, Cetinje)

Three students were from the 1st grade, three from the 2nd grade, three from the 3rd grade, and one from the 4th grade and all students were Montenegrins.

Do you have experience of owning or carrying a weapon?

POSSESSION / CARRYING	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Possession		6	4	3	2	15
Carrying		6	2	7		15

Table 31: Experience of possessing and carrying a weapon

Should young people own / carry weapons?

POSESSION / CARRYING	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Possession		6	5	4		15
Carrying		6	6	2	1	15

Table 32: Should young people own weapons?

Have you ever been endangered by a weapon?

TYPE OF EXPOSURE	SEX				TOTAL
	F		M		
	YES	NO	YES	NO	
Use of a weapon by another person	1	5	2	7	15
Personal use of a weapon		6		9	15

Table 33: Have you been endangered by a weapon in the last six months?

Do you know of anybody who has been the victim of firearms misuse in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	6		6
No	3	6	9
TOTAL	9	6	15

Table 34: Victim of firearms misuse in the neighbourhood in the last six months



Have you discussed weapons with anybody in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	5	4	9
No	4	2	6
TOTAL	9	6	15

Table 35: Have you discussed weapons with anybody in the last six months?

When do you talk about weapons and with whom?

RESPONSE	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Only from time to time / occasionally.	4	2	6
With peers.	3		3
With someone they can get advice from.	4	2	6
Unknown.	3	2	5
TOTAL	14	6	20

Table 36: When do you talk about weapons and with whom?

What do you think about the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE when it comes to civilian firearms possession?

- *"I think this data should be checked, but if this has been confirmed, then I think we should pass a Law banning arms possession.*
- *I think adults should not use weapons, except under certain circumstances.*
- *This is awful.*
- *I do not believe it.*
- *I think citizens do not need weapons at all, and the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE is not any kind of model for other countries, for this is completely unnecessary.*
- *I think the Government needs to improve safety and efficiency and forbid young people and adults to carry weapons and impose more severe penalties for carrying and using weapons.*
- *This is the Montenegrin tradition.*
- *This is our tradition, our legacy, and thus this fact is no surprise.*
- *Weapons should be carried only by law enforcement officials.*
- *This is our tradition and we should respect it.*
- *I'm not surprised.*
- *Montenegrins traditionally possess weapons.*
- *This is why we are the country with the highest crime rate in the world.*
- *Tradition dictates that each family or individual has a weapon."*

This fact was received with a measure of suspicion although weapons possession by Montenegrin citizens was seen as an undesirable fact. Participants thought that *"the Government needs to improve safety and efficiency and forbid young people and adults to carry weapons and impose more severe penalties on those who do carry and use weapons"*. Participants also cited tradition as the root cause of this phenomenon, and a third of the group weren't surprised by this fact.

How do you feel about that?

- *"Not safe at all.*
- *I think this is a great threat.*
- *It is not pleasant to know that every demented person can carry and use a weapon.*
- *If people stick to the rules and if we talk more about the misuse of firearms, I am sure the number will diminish.*
- *It is out of control. The black market flourishes here.*
- *Well, this is not something to boast about.*
- *I think this is ok.*
- *I feel 'proud'*
- *This is not something to boast about, but still such a number of weapons can be useful in self-defence.*
- *Well, I don't like hearing that somebody pointed a gun at my neighbour."*

The students stated they felt unsafe and uneasy upon learning about the number of weapons in Montenegro. Instead of describing their feelings, some students made a few suggestions and estimates.

3.5.1 Summary of findings

- The girls have no experience of holding or carrying a weapon, as opposed to four boys who have a weapon, and two who carry them.
- In replying to the question 'Should young people own or carry weapons?' the majority of boys responded positively in both cases (carrying and possession), as opposed to the girls, who gave a negative answer.
- Three out of fifteen students from the group have been endangered by a weapon being used by another person.
- More than half of the young men from the group (six), stated that that in the last six months some people from their neighbourhood had been victims of firearms misuse. All the girls responded negatively to the same question.

This focus group gave very few answers in the Evaluation Sheet, and the answers were very short (often consisting of just one word). Only three students responded positively to the question 'were you freely able to express your opinion during the group work?' One student described the atmosphere in the group discussion as "*very interesting and very lively,*" although most participants were not active during the discussion. It is curious that both children (and parents) said they would like to take part in a discussion of mixed groups of parents and children. The topic that was of greatest interest to the young people was the reasons why young people and children use firearms. The facilitators described the group dynamics as follows: "*The participants were not active, apart from a few individuals, and the group accepted their dominant role. Everybody listened carefully, although they occasionally laughed and joked among themselves, and did not want to disclose the reason for laughing. They were hard to motivate to group discussion. The most convenient answers for them were 'yes' and 'no'.*" There were a couple of individuals (boys) who mostly answered the questions, while the group accepted their answers. The girls were just passive observers, and when prompted by the moderator mostly gave short answers or repeated those previously mentioned. To the moderator's question whether the topic was not interesting or if there was a problem, all the participants replied that the topic was interesting, that everything was fine, but that they were tired. At the beginning of the workshop, everybody asked if they could give a written answer.



3.5.2 Analysis of key discussion questions

Should young people have weapons?

All girls and boys replied that there was no reason why young people should be allowed to have a weapon except for hunting purposes (a hunting exam can be taken from the age of 15).

Should adults have weapons at home?

This group of high school students was the least focused on this question. The question, as it can be seen from children's answers, gave rise to a number of associations that remained dissociated from opinions on why adults possess weapons.

- *Every home has a gun, for self-defence. (M)*⁹
- *How will the Herceg Novi murder be resolved (an entire family was killed by a third person)? everybody is walking freely here. (M)*
- *Drug addicts from Cetinje knock on the door at night, they steal; we need firearms for self-defence. (M)*
- *For celebration purposes: Christmas, Slavas (family saint days), birthdays. (M)*
- *We don't need them, but they are present. (F)*¹⁰
- *It's the traditional way of celebration. (M)*
- *To discharge three bullets when your son is born, this is a must. (M)*
- *Yes, at weddings. (M)*
- *We don't need them, we can do without guns, although everybody thinks they need them for self defence. (F)*
- *Institutions do not function well in Cetinje, there are no police, all (perpetrators of crimes) are free. (M)*

Should young people be carrying weapons?

We got only two answers here, which were vague and incomplete.

- *"No, everybody".*
- *"What do I need a gun for, when my friend is carrying it." (M)*

Is there a reason in your opinion that adults should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

We got two answers here, stating that neither young people nor adults should carry weapons.

Why do young people use firearms?

The limited comments of group members were influenced by the knowledge that criminal and socially unacceptable motivations influence why young people use weapons.

- *Drugs. (M)*
- *Family education. (M)*
- *Nerves. (M)*
- *Vendetta (there is no difference between young people and adults when it comes to vendetta). (M)*

⁹ M = Male.

¹⁰ F = Female.

- Conflicts between different families. (M)
- Influence of society. (M)

Why do adults use firearms?

Participants also related associations with the adult use of weapons.

- *"There were occasions in the past when a teacher put a pistol on his desk, and then a friend sticks a knife over the pistol. (M)*
- *When they are demented. (M)*
- *Because of vendetta. (M)*
- *The reasons are constantly described in the papers." (M)*

3.5.3 Group discussion summary

Attitudes of young people towards children and weapons:

- **Weapons possession:** the attitude of this group of students is somewhat unclear.
- **Carrying firearms:** young people have no reason to carry weapons.
- **Use of firearms:** the discussion was tainted by the knowledge that criminal and socially unacceptable motivations influence the use of weapons by young people.

Attitudes of young people towards adults and guns:

- **Weapon possession:** students did not give any coherent opinions.
- **Carrying weapons:** adults should not carry weapons.
- **Use of weapons:** the reasons adults use weapons were only stated and not expanded on, and were related to socially unacceptable behaviour.

3.6 Focus Group 6 - Parents (High school, Cetinje)

This was the smallest group in the entire research and consisted of only seven members. The parents ranged from 36 to 48 years of age. There were three mothers and four fathers (Table 37). All parents live in Cetinje, all are married and all parents referred to themselves as Montenegrin. Additional data on age, employment and education can be found in Annex F.

Have you ever owned or carried a weapon?

POSSESSION / CARRYING	SEX				TOTAL
	F		M		
	YES	NO	YES	NO	
Possession		4	1		5
Carrying		4		2	6
TOTAL		8	1	2	11

Table 37: Experience of possessing and carrying a weapon



Should young people own weapons?

	SEX		TOTAL
	F	M	
Yes			
No	4	3	7
TOTAL	4	3	7

Table 38: Should young people own weapons?

Have you ever been endangered by a weapon?

TYPE OF EXPOSURE	SEX				UNKNOWN	TOTAL
	F		M			
	YES	NO	YES	NO		
Use of a weapon by somebody else	2	2		3		7
Personal use of a weapon		2		3	2	7

Table 39: Endangered by a weapon in the last six months

Do you of anybody who has been the victim of firearms misuse in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	1		1
No	2	4	6
TOTAL	3	4	7

Table 40: Knowledge about victims in their neighbourhood in the last six months

Have you talked about weapons in the last six months?

	SEX		TOTAL
	M	F	
Yes	2	3	5
No	1	1	2
TOTAL	3	4	7

Table 41: Have you talked about weapons in the last six months?

What do you think about the fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE when it comes to civilian firearms possession?

- "I think this is not OK.
- This is a disaster.
- This speaks for itself, doesn't it?
- This is a big social problem that has not been effectively addressed."

How do you feel about that?

- "Uneasy.
- It's not pleasant at all.

- *It's been like that for the last twenty years.*
- *I'm in favour of 'no arms'.*

3.6.1 Summary of findings

- One father wrote that he carries a weapon.
- All parents stated that young people have no reason to carry a weapon.
- Two mothers have been endangered by somebody else's use of a weapon.
- One parent stated that in the last six months somebody was a victim of firearms misuse in their neighbourhood.
- Most parents discuss the issue of weapons.

This group of parents gave very short statements both in the Evaluation Sheet and during the group discussion. Asked if they could freely express their opinions – they all responded positively. The parents wrote they felt *"fine, easy, useful"*, but that the *"topic was unpleasant"*. The atmosphere during the group discussion was described as *"warm, pleasant, fair, genuine, normal, good and positive"*. Asked what in their opinion should be done in a different way, they gave only one suggestion: *"join children and parents together"*. The facilitator's opinion is that the topic was very well responded to by the parents, as this is something they often think about, and they are worried about the environment their children will grow up in. They are interested in why weapons are kept at home and why young people use weapons. The atmosphere was full of tolerance, discussion was vivacious, only at the beginning of the workshop there was an unpleasant scene, with one mother leaving the workshop because this topic affected her due to a tragic event in the family (her nephew killed his uncle). Afterwards everything went well.

3.6.2 Analysis of key discussion questions

Should you have a weapon at home?

Parents' opinions are divided into two categories: one is that there is no reason for this, and the other is that a weapon should be kept out of tradition, for hunting, if given as a gift (trophy), etc.

Should young people carry weapons?

No. There is no reason why young people should carry weapons. But young people should not be encouraged to keep a weapon at home and weapons at home should be kept out of their reach.

Why do young people use weapons?

A number of situations in which guns might be used was listed. All situations related to personal safety and tradition.

Why do adults carry weapons?

Some stated there was no reason for adults to carry weapons and others stated personal safety as a motivation for carrying a weapon.

3.6.3 Group discussion summary

The parents from this group stated that young people should neither possess nor carry weapons for there are no justifiable reasons to do so. However, a substantial list of possible motivations for using a gun reflects a positive attitude towards young people carrying and owning a weapon. Material from the group discussion shows some unauthentic answers.



4 Summary

4.1 General information

- This research was conducted in three Montenegrin cities: Podgorica, Nikšić and Cetinje.
- The schools participating in the research were: Elementary School 'Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin' (Podgorica) and Elementary School 'Pavle Rovinski' (Podgorica), the School of Mechanics (Nikšić) and a High School (Cetinje).
- The research included three focus groups of children: one group aged 13 - 14 (Podgorica) consisting of 12 children and two groups of high school children (Nikšić and Cetinje) amounting to 25 children aged 14 - 18. The total number of children participating was 37.
- The research included three focus groups of parents: one group of parents were of elementary school children (11 in total) and two groups of parents were of high school students (17 in total). The total number of parents participating was 29.

4.2 Attitudes towards possession, carrying and use of weapons

Age 13 -14

When we talk about firearms possession we can see that children clearly perceive firearms to be dangerous, and understand the circumstances and motivations that influence their use. Knowledge about the consequences of firearms misuse, together with the values related to the use of firearms, are accompanied by very negative feelings. Children thus feel that weapons possession is not acceptable except when used by professionals under controlled conditions (e.g. sports shooting).

- This negative attitude and feelings about weapons being dangerous is most evident in the youngest age group, where children have mostly experienced weapons indirectly.
- Awareness about the hazards posed by firearms and attendant negative feelings about weapons does not correspond with attitudes towards behaviour around firearms. Children considered weapons to be acceptable under certain conditions: under peer influence; for revenge; or in the case of a loss of self-control.
- Concerning firearms possession children have different attitudes both in favour of and against arms possession.
- Concerning the carrying of firearms by adults, girls think that adults should not carry firearms but boys find reasons why adults should carry weapons.
- Concerning firearms use, children identify a considerable number of reasons or motivations for why adults can use weapons.

Age 15 - 18

- The gap between knowledge, perceptions and assessments of firearms risks, and the readiness to use a weapon, is even more pronounced.
- The attitudes of the older children are of a more declarative nature and are in accordance with expected, less realistic values. One more example is children's experience with firearms possession and their attitudes against weapons possession. Concerning the carrying of weapons and an awareness of the reasons why weapons should not be carried, there is also a discrepancy.
- Concerning the use of firearms, this age group came up with far more motivations or reasons for weapons use which shows an even greater discrepancy with the attitude that young people should not possess firearms. Motivations given included some adult values and relations, auto-destructive tendencies and socially unacceptable behaviours.

- Concerning adult weapons possession, on the one hand it is to be expected since firearms possession is acceptable as a part of recreational or professional activities. On the other hand, young people have developed other values and motivations that justify firearms possession, such as: improved self-image when carrying a weapon; (which is important for some social groups); traditional values and fear from threats; revenge; and more often than not, vendettas.
- Both young people and children think that adults do not need to carry weapons.
- Children and young people think that neither children nor young people should use weapons.
- In the Cetinje focus group, there is far less consistency within the group in terms of attitudes towards possession, carrying and especially use of weapons.
- The prevailing attitude was that young people should not carry a weapon, but due to the atmosphere in which this view was expressed, and in view of its collision with firearms possession and carrying by a part of the group – it appears as inauthentic.
- One gets the impression that numerous motives, accompanied with intense feelings and related to socially unacceptable phenomena emerge quickly and reduce the space and possibilities of finding alternative solutions for critical situations; they are accepted as necessity or protection of basic safety, and are maintained as such.
- Attitudes become more confusing the older the person becomes and the more firearms experience that person acquires.

Parents

- Parents of elementary school children list “only sporting” purposes as a reason for firearms possession, but also others such as “*preservation of one’s privacy, self and property*”.
- They are against young people owning firearms, but think that children should make up their own mind about firearms possession when they grow up.
- They are afraid that young people can be influenced in various ways to use firearms (to show-off in bad company, when under the influence of drugs, owing to a lack of adequate communication between parents/children, because of films with an aggressive content and so on).
- Parents of high school students (the Nikšić group) that were mostly female had the most consistent attitudes towards both firearms possession and the carrying and use of firearms: weapons should not be possessed, carried or used. These parents stated precisely all motivations for the use of firearms but in the context of situations that are hard to control. This same attitudes applies to adults possessing, carrying and using weapons too.
- Parents of Cetinje high school students gave few opinions and there was limited group discussion. When asked specific questions parents answered that young people should not possess, carry or use firearms and they were surprised to learn about the presence of weapons in Montenegro, especially in their hometowns, which caused quite a reserved atmosphere of participants being closed and passive (this was especially true of the female participants). Motivation for use of firearms (vendetta is mentioned a couple of times) includes criminal factors together with dissatisfaction with the legal protection system.
- Parents would like to protect children from the presence firearms, but they personally are not ready to renounce ‘the protection’ that firearms themselves offer. Moreover, none of the parents are aware of how they are role models to their children and that their behaviour is far more influential than a ban on weapons for young people.



5 Recommendations

The schools included in the project more or less recognize the problem of children and weapons, as well as the children and parents themselves, which can be seen in the results of the discussion groups. The school management systems are mostly ready to accept any kind of violence against children prevention programme except for the High School of Cetinje, which was non-committal. The data from this participatory research has given us an idea about how firearms are perceived by young people. Children should be encouraged to adopt other values and models of behaviour that do not celebrate the possession, carrying and use of weapons.

I think that the prevention programme should consist of a number of components:

- Stimulating and developing activities by which young people, teachers and parents would create their own, more protective environment and try to promote more constructive values than the existing ones.
- These activities should include basic social skills that should also be included in other school activities (non-violent communication, building constructive relations, learning affirmative speech in social interactions, acknowledging differences, developing empathy and moral judgment as well as strategies of non-violent conflict solution).
- More generally to raise the level of knowledge and awareness on the issue of children and weapons through on-going activities.

Annex A – Focus Group 1

1 Focus group 1 - Children aged 13-14

Date: 10.10.2006

School: Elementary School 'Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin,' Podgorica

Duration of focus group: two school periods

Goal of the focus group: to explore and examine the attitudes of children and young people towards firearms (possession, carrying and use of firearms).

Facilitator: Radoje Novović

Co-facilitator: Dijana Popović-Gavranović

2 Notes taken during the discussion

Key questions for discussion:

- They think that Montenegro is very well armed, they are not surprised that Montenegro is among the most heavily armed countries.
- A boy asks when (at what age) children most often use arms.

Do you think that there is a reason for which young people should be allowed to have a weapon?

- No reason (girls).
- No reason because firearms are dangerous, e.g. an angry person can kill his friend. I have a hunting rifle and have passed a hunting exam on how to handle weapons; underage persons must not use firearms although adults allow us to do so when we ask (M).
- No, because of immaturity and acting before thinking things through.
- No, someone calls him names and he can kill.
- No, they cannot handle it.
- No, they can become criminals and end up in prison.
- My cousin was 15 and he had a gun that he used for self-defence (he is a refugee, and he had to defend himself).
- No, the main test for handling weapons is army service (regular army service during which one learns to handle weapons).
- No reason.
- No, I heard that in the USA children can carry firearms and defend themselves if attacked, but I think this is not OK.
- No, they'd better own computers.
- No, it is dangerous.
- No, somebody may use it as a joke, and the consequences are horrible.
- No, we are exposed to dangers, but we should never use firearms.

Do you think that there is a reason for which adults should have a weapon at home?

- Yes, if they undertake tests for patience and thinking; I saw on 'candid camera' a man in Russia flying off the handle and shooting a guy.
- Yes, but it should be registered and hidden from children; and he/she should know how to handle it.



- Yes, if they have a license.
- In the majority of homes in Gusinje everybody has a rifle, a pistol, a submachine gun and so on and keeps them within the reach of children.
- Yes, but should not keep rifles, but only small pistols – in case they might need them.
- Yes, but they should use it only in self-defence.
- Yes, adults who own a weapon should have a stable mind.
- No, except in areas with a lot of criminals or armed conflict, here no, in the countryside yes, because of vendettas.
- I know that one village voluntary surrendered three thousand rifles to the police.
- We need protection and defence, but not weapons possession (F).
- We need to determine which households can have a gun, and naturally the official authorities (military, police) (F).
- No, they use it at weddings regardless of the consequences (F).
- If the police did their job, people would not need to own a weapon (M).
- Yes, when it is necessary and if they can handle it (F).
- Yes, in a situation when they are in danger, for the purpose of self-defence, just in case (F).
- Yes, older people, but not in order to use it, except in self-defence (F).
- Many people keep one in spite of the hazards (F).
- If people talked more sense, if they settled their disputes in court, I would exchange a weapon with 'kind words'; of course huntsmen and sportsmen can keep them (M).
- If there was adequate security in the town, this would not be necessary, but the town is full of violence (F).
- If we had modern technology, no weapons would be required; the police would have to fulfil their duties (M).
- Yes, adults, officials, police, security personnel, for self-defence purposes, but not for households (M).
- Some keeps them out of tradition (M).
- Some keep them in memory of their fathers (M).
- No, just older than 40 - 50, younger than 20 – no way, different stories in the city can make a man kill his friend (F).
- Older people are more mature, but not all of them (M).
- A special pistol should be made for household purposes – that can only render victims unconscious for a while (M).
- If there were enough security, no family would need a gun, but at any rate they should be kept out of the reach of children (F).

Is there a reason in your opinion that young people should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- No, young people should not get involved in fights; they should avoid such situations (M).
- If they are being threatened, and there are a lot of such cases (F).
- They abduct children (M).
- When someone illegally possesses a weapon, he can shoot anyone whenever he feels like it (M).
- I go hunting (M).
- If he is involved in some sports (sports shooting) (M).
- Even if he is a sports shooter, there is no reason for that (F).
- I would carry it every day if my family and myself were threatened by someone (M).
- If I wanted to revenge (M).
- We should have closed-circuit television and have the police respond quickly to calls for assistance, then there would be no need for young people to carry weapons (M).



- No (F).
- A guy killed two people, in the countryside, a child could do it too, we need to introduce laser control devices (M).
- No, every sports fan has a knife during a match, we should not go to sports matches (M).
- There is a difference between cold steel and firearms.
- No, they should know the company they are going out with and engage in sports (M).
- No (M).
- No, because we are safe (M).
- Yes, in the woods (M).
- No reason (F).
- Conflicts should be resolved by parents, and not with guns (F).
- Conflicts should be resolved with words (F).
- If the area is not safe, it is better to move, ask for help (F).
- Police should close illegal shops so that young people cannot obtain weapons (M).

Is there a reason in your opinion that adults should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- If someone in the family is violent (M).
- Not every day (All girls).
- He carries it if he likes it, but there is no need, there is no war or vendettas, we can live in peace (M).
- No (most M).
- No, if someone is famous, and he did something to somebody, they could get back to him because of that (M).
- No, only in the house (F).
- No, somebody does it for fun, to show that he is bigger, better, for defence purposes, because danger is lurking (F).
- No, we are safer than other states (F).
- In general no – but yes if somebody has had a conflict and is afraid for his safety (F).
- We are not safe if we are the most heavily armed country in SEE; every house has a gun and can use it; this is unnecessary, to kill a man is awful (F).
- Podgorica is on its way to Europe, so we need guns, not in rural areas though (M).
- It all depends on the person (F).
- Video games should be reduced – they influence children's minds (M).

What reasons can motivate young people to use firearms?

- I heard from a friend that there was this game Andreas in the USA, with lots of shooting, so children now imitate the character who killed and shot people, cars etc (M).
- If his friends carries them, so does he (M).
- If someone did me wrong I would do it (F).
- I would get my revenge (three girls) (F).
- I agree in the case of revenge, but not that young people should carry a weapon (M).
- Vendettas have been abolished, we should not use weapons (M).
- It is necessary in remote places, within tribes where there are still vendettas, not in the city (F).
- Where there are fanatics (M).
- Revenge, in order to show off, when his mates are putting him down (F).



- I would leave it to the justice system, I would never stain my hands with blood (M).
- In Gusinje a man was being robbed of his beans, he came out with his nephew, gave him a pistol, and the nephew shot them in order to prevent the theft (M).
- The police should react (M).
- Under the influence of drugs, alcohol (M).
- Under peer influence, if everyone does it (M).
- If I lived in Belgrade, I would carry one; I heard there is gunfire there and it is dangerous (he's never been to Belgrade) (M).
- There was a gang gunfight, two children happened to be there and they shot them, it is in such situations that we should have guns (M).
- A family member kills another one, and then shoots himself (M).
- If he is bored with his life, there are such people (M).
- A person with a mental disorder can kill himself (F).
- Last year in Plav, a girl shot herself dead with a rifle (M).

What reasons can motivate adults to use firearms?

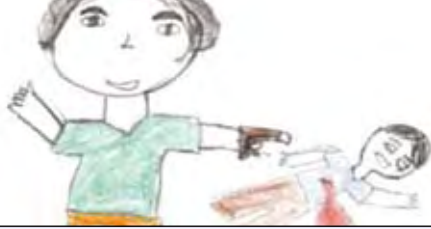
- In order to protect his child from drugs, e.g. someone is offering drugs to the child, and the parent kills the drug dealer (M).
- To protect his child (F).
- On Kakaritska gora a man killed his daughter because of her boyfriend, she was a student in our school, this shouldn't have happened (M) (All agreed).
- Children have a fight at school, a parent comes, hits someone's child, his father gets angry and there is a gunfight (M).
- When one gets drunk, when he's under the influence of drugs (M).
- Mentally disordered (F).
- A child breaks his arm on an excursion, and the parent attacks the teacher (M).
- He can kill someone during a celebration (F).
- Robberies, thefts (M).

3 Evaluation Sheet

(To be completed by children)

Were you able to freely express your opinion during the group discussion?

- I could freely express myself during the discussion on each topic.
- Yes.
- Yes, of course.
- Yes, of course, without being influenced by anybody.
- Yes.
- Well, yes, why should I hide something that should be made known.
- Yes, we could speak freely.
- I could freely give my opinion.
- Yes, because all that was being said had to do with everyday life.
- Yes.



- Well, the questions were a bit hard to answer, as we were constantly asked 'why'. I was frank and open.
- Yes, of course!

How did you feel during group discussions?

- Good, because I could speak my mind.
- During the conversation we felt safe and secure.
- I felt relaxed for I had a permission to speak my mind.
- Well, I had the jitters, as this was the first time that I should 'represent' the young people of Montenegro.
- I felt good and I even learnt something.
- I felt fine as we all exchanged our opinions.
- I felt responsible while giving my opinion.
- I felt good.
- Relaxed, pleasant, super.
- I felt good, as if I were in a 'press conference'.
- I was satisfied because I could speak my mind.
- I felt good.
- Relaxed, pleasant, super!

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- I was a bit excited and scared because of the questions.
- The atmosphere was good, i.e. everybody was interested in the questions.
- It was super. We exchanged our opinions.
- The atmosphere was very relaxed.
- We were very open, mostly.
- It was good. The moderators treated us well.
- Well, the atmosphere during the discussion was very pleasant. We all gave our opinion.
- The atmosphere was not tense at all. Everybody said what he or she thought. They were not constrained to do anything.
- Well, it was calm. Somebody would cut in, but the people treated us nicely, and everything went fine.
- We were all relaxed and gave our opinion.
- It was super, fluent conversation and nice stories.

Is there something in your opinion that should have been done in a different way?

- In my opinion, I would always use nice words rather than weapons.
- In my opinion, nothing.
- Everything was done as it should be.
- Everything was fine, in my opinion.
- Maybe some children did not say everything they had wanted to.
- I think everything was appropriate and nothing should have been done in a different way.
- They should have picked a couple of classes so that more people would give their opinion, for 12 students cannot represent all the students of the school.
- I think everything was done as it should be, and all the questions were well formulated.



- Well, we were all active. Maybe we could have had more topics.
- Nothing.
- I think everything was done as it should be and questions were well formulated.
- Nothing at all. Everything was fine. The questions may have influenced us not to use weapons.

Which topic for discussion (out of those offered) was especially interesting for you?

- I liked the topic that young people should not carry a weapon and never use one.
- I found the question: 'Should young people use weapons?' interesting as I don't think I need one.
- The topic 'When should a weapon be used?'
- For me a very interesting topic was what would motivate young people to carry a weapon.
- Should young people carry a weapon?
- The topic: Should young people carry a weapon?
- An especially interesting topic was that young people carry a weapon in their everyday life.
- What are the reasons that children should use a weapon in their everyday life?
- When we talked about if there was a reason why young people should carry a weapon, and even use it.
- For me the most interesting topic was that one should not carry a weapon.
- Carry and use of weapons by civilians.
- Use of weapons by young people.

Is there a topic that you would be especially interested in regarding weapons and young people?

- I was interested in the topic of young people using and carrying weapons.
- There is no such topic.
- Is there a reason that young people (under 18) should use a weapon (a good, justifiable reason)?
- Maybe the topic: 'What would happen if young people used weapons?'
- No, I think we have covered the entire topic related to weapons and young people.
- I think there isn't.
- Well, there is the topic: 'Young people should carry a weapon every day'.
- How to prevent the use of weapons and introduce prevention measures for all children?
- There isn't, as we have covered today everything that interested me.
- Are there children in Montenegro who officially possess weapons?
- Young people carrying weapons. I think this should be reduced as much as possible.
- Yes, it is weapons proliferation in Montenegro, i.e. handling of weapons.

4 Questions for the facilitator and co-facilitator

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- Children were interested, frank, spontaneous, active, very motivated to take part in the group discussion.
- The atmosphere was great for a discussion on this topic. The discussion and exchange of opinions were such that one could conclude that children were very interested in such a way of work and in this topic.

How did the children respond to the topics for discussion (the key questions)?

- Very well.
- The topic was extremely interesting for the children and they responded very positively.



Which question (topic) prompted most discussion during the group conversation?

- The topic: Is there a reason that young people should carry a weapon in their everyday life; motives stated by young people as the reasons for using weapons.
- The fact that Montenegro is the most heavily armed country in SEE, after the USA, is in itself a very interesting fact, together with the motives that lead young people to use firearms.

Were there questions that were not interesting for the group members?

No.

What is the personal impression of the facilitator (co-facilitator) of the group dynamics / group interaction?

- The children were satisfied to have taken part in the group discussion, they observed the rules of group work, showing respect for one another, and there was enough space for everybody to express his/her opinion and feelings.
- Everything went off fine, naturally some children talked more and constantly took the floor, but everybody had a chance to state their opinion on all issues. The group dynamics was under control, which made possible for everybody to speak their mind and for the discussion to go on in a democratic spirit and tolerant atmosphere.

5 General observations

Number of students: 1,459

Number of senior teachers: 24 ¹¹

Number of teachers: 35

Number of early primary teachers: 8

Note down the remarks, or else the list of all the observations relevant for understanding the situation and interpretation of the data.

This is the school that has accepted most displaced children since the beginning of the war in ex Yugoslavia, at first from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, and then from Kosovo, because of the proximity of the suburb where the displaced population was accommodated. At first the school organized an informal school programme for Roma children, in order that they would be included into the regular curriculum faster, as the Roma children did not know the local language, and many of them were older than elementary school ages. At the moment 580 Roma children attend the school Božidar Vuković Podgoričanin, mostly displaced from Kosovo, 400 of which go to classes in the main school building, and the others attend a local class situated in the very suburb they live in. The school is located in the part of the town with a number of families living on the margins (without basic social needs). A number of parents are in prison for robbery and use of firearms, which is certainly an important risk factor for the children coming from these families, when it comes to firearm use. It happens that a student brings a cold steel (weapon) to the classroom, but the school management notices this in time and tries to monitor the situation in order not to make a habit out of this. The management has identified a case of a student that is in potential danger of using a weapon. The school authorities think that it would be very useful to introduce a sort of prevention programme both for children and parents related to prevention of firearms for use in conflicts.

NOTE: In this school a parent's meeting was scheduled three times. Four parents showed up at the first meeting, and nobody came to the other two scheduled meetings. From the school management we found out that there is a considerable problem of school and parent cooperation, and that parents find it very hard to come to the school, even when they have to justify their child's absence.

Facilitator & co-facilitator: Radoje Novović and Dijana Popović-Gavranović

Date: 10.10.2006

¹¹ Senior teachers have completed a four-year University degree in teaching whereas teachers only complete a two-year University degree in teaching. Both teachers teach students from 4th – 8th grade of elementary school. Early primary teachers teach pupils from 1st – 4th grade. A number of older teachers completed a secondary school for teachers. A majority of all the teachers completed a two-year University degree and the younger teachers have mostly done the four-year University teaching degree.





Annex B – Focus Group 2

1 Focus group 2 – parents of children aged 13 - 14

Date: 25.10.2006

School: Elementary School 'Pavle Rovinski', Podgorica

Duration of focus group: 60 minutes

Goal of the focus group: to explore and examine the characteristics of attitudes of parents towards firearms (possession, carrying and use of firearms).

Facilitator: Radoje Novović

Co-facilitator: Dijana Popović-Gavranović

2 Additional data on participants

Table 1 shows the occupational profile of the parents of elementary schoolchildren and education level of the group is shown in Table 2. Therefore, we dealt with a group of parents with high school and university education.

OCCUPATION	#
Clerk	3
Worker	1
Teacher	1
Driver	1
Journalist	1
Nurse	1
Sales manager	1
Housewife	1
Unknown	1
TOTAL	11

Table 1: Focus group 2 - occupation of parents

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	#
High school	5
University	6
TOTAL	11

Table 2: Focus group 2 – level of education

Rate of employment is shown in Table 3 with one father and one mother unemployed.

EMPLOYMENT		
SEX	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED
Women	4	1
Men	5	1
TOTAL	9	2

Table 3: Focus group 2 - employment



The group is composed of mixed nationalities although the majority of parents are Montenegrins (Table 4).

NATIONALITY				
MONTENEGRIN	BOSNIAK	MUSLIM	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
7	1	2	1	11

Table 4: Focus group 2 – nationalities

3 Notes taken during the discussion

(Parents of 7th and 8th graders and one parent of a 4th grader)

Key questions for discussion:

Do you think that there is a reason for which we should have a weapon at home?

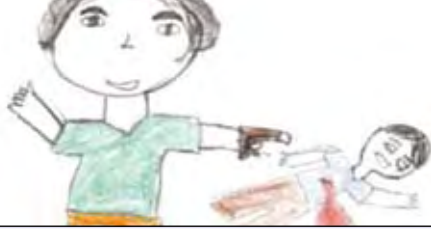
- No (F).
- My husband is a huntsman, in that case yes, but in general no, it is not good for the children (F).
- Hunters can have it, others can but need not possess a weapon (F).
- From the point of view of privacy and person and property protection there is. The state may not be able to provide all this, so people can hold firearms in accordance with legal regulations (carry – no, possess - yes), and if licensed by the relevant authority (M).
- Tradition, it has been so from time immemorial, but this again depends on the individual. I do not like guns, and consider this unnecessary (M).
- There is a law on weapons, but there was not public opinion poll when this law was formulated. A law on property taxation should include weapons possession as well, and this should be well taxed. This was well regulated in Serbia: tax was imposed on hunting, sports and firearms, so now everybody wants to get rid of their weapons. I am against traditional firearms possession, this should be allowed only for sports and recreational purposes, but we also have illegal hunting, so maybe weapons possession should be banned in this case. Some people possess a weapon because of their aggressive character (M).
- No, I am against that, I have children, which is why I would never keep a weapon at home (F).
- No, we have never had a weapon at home, I think one should not possess a weapon (F).
- I have a weapon, I will surrender it when I get an order that it should be seized. The relevant authorities do not function as they should, the system is not developed, and it gives no protection. I have a weapon, I do not carry it but I used to do so when it was allowed (M).
- It is forbidden to carry a weapon, but it gives a feeling of security, so we should keep it at home (M).

Should children and young people be directed (educated) towards keeping a weapon at home?

- Absolutely not (All).
- When children grow up they will make up their own mind about that (F).
- Well, hopefully better times will come and children will not need them (M).

Is there a reason in your opinion that we should carry a weapon on an everyday basis?

- Maybe a wrongdoer who expects somebody to avenge him (M).
- I do not agree, only those who mean harm carry weapons (M).
- Weapons are carried by those who want to show off, or to be violent (F).
- One cannot go to a cafe, as pistols are drawn in the smallest row (F).
- A bullet can hit a passer-by and wound him (this happened in Belgrade) (M).



- Concealed carrying of a weapon should be forbidden, especially to young people, and parents should lock their weapons away from their children (F).
- Concealed carry no, this is not permitted anyway, and we voted for that law so this discussion is unnecessary (M).

Is there a reason in your opinion that young people should carry a weapon?

- No, never (All).
- I think the time will come when nobody will carry a weapon (M).

What reasons can motivate young people to use firearms?

- Showing off, drugs, booze (M).
- Violent films (M).
- Adolescence phase, they do not think about their actions (F).
- They see what other children do (F).
- TV, computers, games (F).
- Lack of our (parental) communication with the children (M).
- Weapons should be put away, and children should not know that there is a weapon in the house (F).
- We dismantled our pistol, I do not like to have it in the house, so we gave it to my father-in-law to keep it; I'm afraid of such things, my cousin was killed by his friend, nobody knows why (F).
- Children fight and then make up, but God knows how this would end if they had a gun (F).

What reasons can motivate adults to use firearms?

- When you have a gun, you carry it and use it, in a premeditated and unpremeditated manner, out of emotions, reduced consciousness, or for criminal purposes. I would defend others and myself if my life was at stake or perhaps my property was in danger (M).
- Post-traumatic stress syndrome, sanctions that resulted in frustrations, poverty, population does not travel anywhere outside of Montenegro (closed society), traditional customs in place, habits, during celebrations, (where children are permitted to handle a weapon, too) (M).

4 Evaluation Sheet

(To be completed by the parents)

Have you been able to freely express your opinion during the group discussion?

All participants responded with 'Yes'.

How did you feel during group discussions?

- Some specific data on possession and carry of firearms were revealed, the consequences of concealed carry – so this was not very pleasant.
- I felt totally relaxed during the discussion.
- Completely normal.
- Completely relaxed (two respondents).
- Pleasant.
- I was interested.
- Fine.
- Easy.
- Free.



How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- All were against young people owning firearms.
- Pleasant.
- Very appropriate (two respondents).
- Positive and normal, without tension.
- Friendly.
- Interesting.
- Pleasant.
- Everybody was open for discussion.

Is there something in your opinion that should have been done in a different way?

- Everything was done as it should be.
- Nothing (three respondents).
- We should issue leaflets, brochures or a permanent column in daily newspapers on firearms and the consequences of their use.
- All was fine.
- Maybe more preliminary (before the discussion) statistical data on the issue, as well as statistics on cause and effects.
- Maybe cite what people have said.
- This way was ok.

Which discussion topic (of those offered) was especially interesting for you?

- Weapons possession by young people.
- Whether firearms should be kept at home.
- That weapons should be concealed from children.
- Well, all topics were interesting.
- If one should have a weapon at all.
- Everything was educational and very interesting.
- Reasons for using a firearm.
- If young people should carry a weapon.
- The first topic - Do you think that there is a reason for which young people should be allowed to have a weapon?
- Should children possess a weapon?

Is there a topic that you would be especially interested in regarding weapons and young people?

- How to prevent young people from carrying weapons?
- Attitudes of young people towards guns.
- No.
- Only that carrying firearms should be strictly forbidden for young people.
- Firearms should be kept only for sporting purposes, and if the existing law allows for their possession, then they should be taxed more than other personal property.
- How to dissuade young people from any kind of firearms and prevent them from using a weapon.
- Communication in the family and school on this issue.



- Mostly all the topics have been covered.
- Those children should have a class in which they can talk about weapons.
- How to implement the law in the sense that no one apart from responsible officials can possess a weapon.

5 Questions for the facilitator and co-facilitator

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- The parents were free to express their opinion, they took part in the discussion spontaneously, they were very engaged during the entire workshop.
- At the beginning the parents showed some reservation, then they frankly stated their opinion, spontaneously joined in the discussion, discretely implied that concealed carrying of weapons is unofficially permitted, and mentioned other criminal actions.

How did the parents respond to the discussion topics (the key questions)?

All topics were well received.

Which question (topic) prompted most discussion during the group conversation?

- Is there any reason why young people should carry a weapon?
- What reasons can motivate young people to use a weapon?

Were there questions that were not interesting for group members?

No.

What is the personal impression of the facilitator (co-facilitator) of group dynamics / group interaction?

- The participants came well before the beginning of the workshop, even before the facilitator, and the facilitators arrived 10 min in advance. Everybody took an equal part in the group discussion, were active, motivated, cooperated with the facilitators, talked on all given topics.
- Most participants have university education.
- They wait for someone to break the ice, then they support his statement.
- The participants were afraid the discussion might develop into a debate about politics. They showed interest in everything related to their children, while pointing out the lost role of the school in protecting children from school violence, so the parents have to solve the problems of peer violence by themselves. They outline the lack of interest of most parents (limited presence of parents even at parents' meetings).

6 General observations

Number of students: 1,290

Number of teaching staff: 90

Number of classes: 44



Note down the remarks, or else all observations relevant for understanding the situation and interpretation of the data.

From the interview with the school principal: so far they have not had any problems with weapons in the school; as for prevention programmes aimed at preventing the use of firearms and protecting children, he thinks they're necessary (because of everything that happens in Montenegro society). The school used to have a school policeman, who resigned and gave over his pistol to the director. When the Law on weapons was adopted, the then principal handed over the pistol to the police. The feedback from the parents was complete, some parents were from the Parents' council, and through the group discussion they made an adequate contribution to the research.

Facilitator & co-facilitator: Radoje Novović and Dijana Popović-Gavranović

Date: 25.10.2006

Annex C – Focus Group 3

1 Focus Group 3 – children aged 15 – 18

Date: 13.10.2006

School: School of Mechanics, Nikšić

Duration of focus group: two school periods

Goal of the focus group: to explore and examine the characteristics of attitudes of children and young people towards firearms (possession, carrying and use of firearms).

Facilitator: Radoje Novović

Co-facilitator: Dijana Popović-Gavranović

2 Notes taken during the discussion

Key questions for discussion:

Do you think that there is a reason for which young people should be allowed to have a weapon?

- No (All girls).
- No, there would be fewer accidents if there were no guns (M).
- No, problems should be solved in a different way (mostly girls gave this answer).
- No, neither young people nor adults should possess a gun (F).

Do you think that there is a reason for which adults should have a weapon at home?

- Only for hunting or sports shooting (F).
- Only professionals (F).
- For security (F and M).
- In view of the present situation, it is necessary for personal safety, but only if necessary (F).
- They should not have many weapons, and use it only occasionally for self-defence (M).
- Because of tradition.
- Some people like guns (M).
- Collectors (F).
- Collectors do not keep bullets (F).
- For hunting and professional purposes (professions that require the carrying of weapons) (M).

Is there a reason in your opinion that young people should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- Neither young people nor adults (F).
- If one has a fight, he might use a gun (M).
- No, but I know that young people do carry guns every day, because of fights (F).
- For domination, but there is no need for that (F).
- Everybody should appeal for this not be done: parents, teachers; but young people should not stop it out of fear from adults, but because of their own conscience, in order not to hurt anybody (M).



- Everybody likes to show off, so they take the gun from their parents, show it off to other children, and boast about their gun (F).
- Such an attitude is adopted at home and conveyed in the street (F).
- So that he would be 'cool' (F).

Is there a reason in your opinion that adults should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- Neither young people nor adults (F).
- To make it unavailable for the children (F).

What reasons can motivate young people to use firearms?

- Showing-off (F).
- Quarrels (F).
- That he is a bigger man if he has a gun (M).
- Under the influence of drugs, alcohol (F).
- For robbery (F).
- For revenge (M).
- For defence purposes (self-defence) (F).
- Older generations commit suicide (everybody agreed that young people do not do that) (F).
- No reason (F).
- When your life is at stake (F).
- Self-defence (M).
- This should be well thought through (M).

What reasons can motivate adults to use firearms?

- Defence (M).
- Revenge (M and F).
- To take his own life (M).
- For suicides under the influence of drugs (F).
- Revenge, self-defence (F).
- To defend / avenge his sister (F).
- Self-defence, revenge (M).
- Quarrels, self-defence (F).
- Under the influence of drugs (F).
- Quarrels, showing-off (F).
- Under the influence of alcohol (M).
- Criminal actions, e.g. if somebody needs drugs (F).
- In order to force someone to do something (F).

3 Evaluation Sheet

(To be completed by the children)

Have you been able to freely express your opinion during the group discussion?

- Yes (three respondents).

How did you feel during group discussions?

- Free.
- Super.

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- We were very interested in this topic and we all played active roles.
- Ok.
- Well I would say it was pleasant.

Is there something in your opinion that should have been done in a different way?

- Nothing special; the only thing, if a parent could attend and give his/her opinion.¹²
- Everything was ok!
- More topics should have been covered.
- I think that everything was fine.
- Nothing. Everything was done in a professional manner.

Which discussion topic (of those offered) was especially interesting for you?

- About drugs, alcohol and smoking.
- Everything.

Is there a topic that you would be especially interested in regarding weapons and young people?

- Yes there is.

4 Questions for the facilitator and co-facilitator

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

Everybody was a bit uneasy at the beginning, probably because the children are not used to such a method of work, and there was also an accident that one of their friends was killed with a cold weapon. Later on they became more open and the atmosphere was finally very stimulating, generating different opinions of young people on the subject.

How did the children respond to the topics for discussion (the key questions)?

The topics were well accepted, and they were very curious about the subject matter.

Which question (topic) prompted most discussion during the group discussion?

Motivations held by young people and adults to use guns.

¹² The children were not informed about the work of the focus group of parents.



Were there questions that were not interesting for group members?

All the questions were interesting, some to a lesser degree, but there were no uninteresting questions.

What is the personal impression of the facilitator (co-facilitator) on group dynamics / group interaction?

Everything went fine.

Annex D – Focus Group 4

1 Focus Group 4 – parents of children aged 15 – 18

Date: 13. 10. 2006

School: School of Mechanics, Nikšić

Duration of focus group: 90 minutes

Goal of the focus group: to identify on the basis of the discussion, the attitudes of parents towards firearms (possession, carrying and use of firearms), to develop the discussion in a spirit of tolerance and to create an atmosphere in which they will be able to freely express their opinions. It was also important that we get an idea of the role weapons have in their everyday life in order to assess the needs for a possible prevention programme.

Facilitator: Radoje Novović

Co-facilitator: Dijana Gavranović – Popović

2 Additional data on participants

OCCUPATION	#
Worker	3
Clerk	1
Teacher	1
Driver/shipping agent	1
Hair dresser	1
Housewife	2
Hair dresser	1
TOTAL	10

Table 5: Focus group 4 - occupation of parents

As Table 6 shows, most parents have high school education, elementary school and two years of university level education.

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	#
Elementary school	2
High school	5
Two years of university	1
Unknown	2
TOTAL	10

Table 6: Focus group 4 - education of parents

And the number of parents in employment is shown in Table 7.

SEX	EMPLOYMENT			TOTAL
	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	PENSIONER	
Women	5	2		7
Men	1		2	3
TOTAL	6	2	2	10

Table 7: Focus group 4 - employment of parents



Table 8 shows the nationalities of the parents.

NATIONALITY			
MONTENEGRIN	SERBIAN	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
7	1	2	10

Table 8: Focus group 4 - nationality of parents

3 Notes taken during the discussion

Key questions for discussion:

Do you think that there is a reason for which young people should be allowed to have a weapon?

- There is no reason for that (half of the group – both women and men).
- One should have a weapon at home (M).
- Well, it is our tradition to carry a weapon (M).
- Only hunters should have a weapon (F).
- If one receives it as a gift (trophy) (M).
- Every house has a gun (M).

Should children and young people be educated towards keeping a weapon at home?

- Young people should not be directed towards having a weapon at home (All).
- If we do keep a weapon at home, it should be beyond the reach of young people (F).

Is there a reason in your opinion that young people should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- Not even professionals should carry a weapon (policemen, soldiers, security personnel etc.) (All).
- There is no reason why young people should carry a weapon (All).

Is there a reason in your opinion that adults should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- There is no reason (All).

Is there a reason why adults should keep a weapon at home?

- No (All).
- Most often this is under the influence of alcohol and drugs (two women).
- Young people show off with guns (F).
- Thus they make a model for many young people (F).
- They have more success with girls (M).
- Under peer influence (two fathers).
- Because the police is lenient towards individuals who openly carry a weapon, and thus make a model for the young (M).
- Weapons are carried because of thefts and criminal actions (two fathers).

What reasons can motivate adults to use firearms?

- Recently this has been influenced by politics (M).

- People carry a weapon also because Montenegrin society is divided into Serbs and Montenegrins (M).
- Under the influence of alcohol and drugs (M and F).
- For a vendetta, because of anger, a quarrel (two men).
- Lack of tolerance for various reasons (M).
- We could talk about this for two days (M).

4 Evaluation Sheet

(To be completed by the parents)

Have you been able to freely express your opinion during the group discussion?

- Yes (All).
- You have to be flexible in order to participate in any group discussion. Any rigid attitude would lead to a conflict of opinion.

How did you feel during group discussions?

- Great.
- Everything was fine, it's just that we should listen to each other more.
- Nice.
- Dominant.
- At ease.
- Relaxed.
- Well, good.
- Free and normal.

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- Relaxed.
- Friendly (two respondents).
- Pleasant.
- Democratic atmosphere in the group.
- Super.
- Very normal.

Is there something in your opinion that should have been done in a different way?

- Everything was fine (three respondents).
- Well, nothing.
- I am very satisfied with the way in which the discussion was conducted.

Which topic of discussion (of those offered) was especially interesting for you?

- Motives for use of weapons by adults.
- All (three respondents).
- How to protect children from that.



- Reasons for use of firearms by underage persons.
- Each topic was interesting. Conclusion: we should ban concealed carry of weapons.
- Well, an interesting subject was why young people carry weapons.

Is there a topic that you would be especially interested in regarding weapons and young people?

- A kind of prevention.
- Banning firearms possession.
- The discussion was sufficiently detailed.
- Their weapons should be seized by all means.
- We have covered everything (I wouldn't specify any particular topic).

5 Questions for the facilitator and co-facilitator

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- Everybody was uneasy and hesitant at the beginning, but gradually an appropriate group discussion developed, with the free expression of attitudes, suggestions and associations with current events.
- The atmosphere was quite good, mostly men talked at the beginning, but soon the women joined in. The discussion was creative and very lively.

How did the parents respond to the topics for discussion (the key questions)?

- Well.
- The topic was extremely interesting for the parents.

Which question (topic) prompted most discussion during the group conversation?

- Motivations for using weapons.
- Motivations for young people to use weapons, as well as concern for the near future.

Were there questions that were not interesting for group members?

- No.

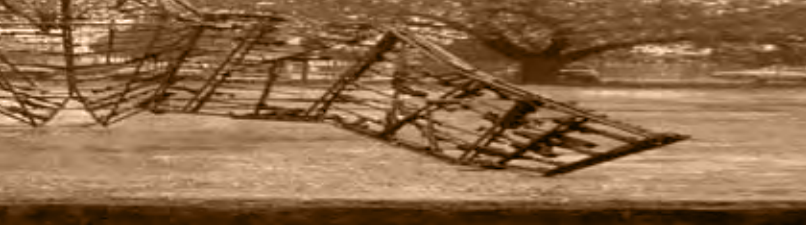
What is the personal impression of the facilitator (co facilitator) on the group dynamics, or else group interaction?

- The group was divided in two (women and men) and one man sat at a distance. The women always waited for the men to say their opinion first. One participant took a dominant role, which was accepted by the others. With the help of the facilitator and co-facilitator, everyone took part in the group discussion.
- All parents insisted that Nikšić is a specific environment where everything 'is closed' and no one is held accountable for anything (drugs, crime).
- They also said that Nikšić has the highest juvenile crime.
- Everything went well and we think that they are interested in a sort of prevention programme for the young.

6 General observations

Number of students: 415 (they do not fulfil the conditions for hiring a pedagogue due to the number of students)

Number of teaching staff: 61



Note down the remarks, or else the list of all the observations relevant for understanding the situation and interpretation of the data.

Two teachers, who work full-time as pedagogues in addition to teaching, were very eager to attend the student focus group (they wished to be present), which we did not allow with the explanation that this could influence the freedom of students to express their attitudes. They were given the goals of the research and offered to participate in the focus group for parents, as parents, which they refused saying they had to go home (the focus-group for parents was scheduled for 18:30).

The children said that two fourth graders could not come.

From the interview with the assistant principal:

- Children sometimes bring a knife or a screwdriver to school; they do not bring firearms, they fall out (maybe less this school year compared to last).
- Prevention programmes related to firearms are necessary – it is better to educate children, than to allow their curiosity get the better of them with undesirable consequences.

Facilitator & co-facilitator: Radoje Novović, Dijana Popović-Gavranović

Date: 13.10.2006



Annex E – Focus Group 5

1 Focus Group 5 – children aged 15 - 18

Date: 18.10.2006

School: High School, Cetinje

Duration of focus group: 80 minutes

Goal of the focus group: to explore and examine the characteristics of attitudes of children and young people towards firearms (possession, carrying and use of firearms).

Facilitator / co facilitator: Dijana Popović-Gavranović

2 Notes taken during the discussion

Key questions for discussion:

Do you think that there is a reason for which young people should be allowed to have a weapon?

- No (All).
- No, only if they pass a hunting test (which can be taken at the age of 15) (M).

Do you think that there is a reason for which adults should have a weapon at home?

- Every house has a gun, in order for families to defend themselves (M).
- How will the Herceg Novi murder be resolved (an entire family was killed), while everybody is walking freely here? (M)
- Drug addicts from Cetinje knock on the door at night, they steal, we need firearms for self-defence (M).
- For celebration purposes: Christmas, Slavas (family saint days), birthdays (M).
- We don't need them, but they are present (F).
- It's the traditional way of celebration (M).
- To discharge three bullets when your son is born, this is a must (M).
- Yes, at weddings (M).
- We don't need them, we can do without guns (F).
- Everybody thinks they need them for self-defence.
- Institutions do not function well in Cetinje, there are no police, all (perpetrators of crimes) walk freely (M).

Is there a reason in your opinion that young people should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- No (All).
- What do I need a gun for, when my friend is carrying it (M).

Is there a reason in your opinion that adults should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- Neither young people nor adults (All).
- They should make weapons unavailable for children (F).



What reasons can motivate young people to use firearms?

- Drugs (M).
- Family education (M).
- Nervousness (M).
- Vendetta (in Cetinje you don't look if it is a young person or an adult when it comes to vendetta) (M).
- Conflicts between different families (M).
- Societal influence (M).

What reasons can motivate adults to use firearms?

- There were examples in the past of a teacher putting a pistol on his desk, and then a friend sticking a knife over the pistol (M).
- When they are demented (M).
- Vendetta (M).
- The reasons are always being described in the papers (M).

3 Evaluation Sheet

(To be completed by the children)

Have you been able to freely express your opinion during the group discussion?

- Yes, entirely (three respondents).

How did you feel during group discussions?

- Free.
- Super.

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- We were very interested in this topic and we all played an active part.
- Ok.
- Well I would say it was pleasant – work and the discussion.

Is there something in your opinion that should have been done in a different way?

- Nothing special; the only thing, if a parent could attend and give his opinion.¹³
- I was especially interested in why young people use weapons.

Which discussion topic (of those offered) was especially interesting for you?

- About drugs, alcohol and smoking.
- Everything.

Is there a topic that you would be especially interested in regarding weapons and young people?

- Yes, there is.

¹³ The children were not informed about the work of the focus group of parents.

4 Questions for the facilitator / co-facilitator

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

The participants were not active, apart from a few individuals, and the group accepted their dominant role. Everybody listened carefully, although they occasionally laughed and joked among themselves, and did not want to disclose why they were laughing.

How did the children receive the topics for discussion (the key questions)?

They were hard to motivate for group discussion. The most convenient answers for them were 'yes' and 'no'.

Which question (topic) prompted most discussion during the group conversation?

Not any one in particular.

Were there questions that were not interesting for group members?

No answer.

What is the personal impression of the facilitator (co-facilitator) on group dynamics / group interaction?

- There were a couple of individuals (boys) who mostly answered the questions posed, while the group accepted their answers.
- The girls were just passive observers, and prompted by the moderator, they mostly gave short answers or repeated those previously mentioned.
- To the moderator's question whether a topic was not interesting or if there was a problem, all the participants replied that the topic was interesting, that everything was fine, but that they were tired.
- At the beginning of the workshop, everybody asked if they could give a written answer.



Annex F – Focus Group 6

1 Focus Group 6 – parents of children aged 15 - 18

Date: 13.10.2006

Present: 8 parents

School: High School, Cetinje

Duration of focus group: 90 minutes

Goal of the focus group: on the basis of the discussion examine attitudes of parents towards firearms (possession, carrying and use of firearms)

Facilitator: Radoje Novović

Co-facilitator: Dijana Gavranović – Popović

2 Additional data on the participants

SEX	AGE		TOTAL
	30 – 40	41 – 50	
Female	2	2	4
Male	1	2	3
TOTAL	3	4	8

Table 9: Focus group 6 - age and sex of parents

This group of parents were engaged in a variety of different occupations (Table 10).

OCCUPATION	#
Programmer	1
Teacher	1
Engineer	1
Economist	2
Nurse	1
Housewife	1
TOTAL	7

Table 10: Focus group 6 - occupation of parents

Most parents had high school education (Table 11).

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	#
Elementary school	2
High school	5
Two-year university	1
Unknown	2
TOTAL	10

Table 11: Focus group 6 - education



And only one parent of the group was unemployed (Table 12).

EMPLOYMENT			
SEX	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	TOTAL
Women	3	3	6
Men	1		1
TOTAL	4	3	7

Table 12: Focus group 6 - employment

3 Notes taken from the discussion

Do you think that there is a reason for which young people should be allowed to have a weapon?

- There is no reason why anybody should own a weapon (most parents).
- For personal safety, in order to save one's life or prevent the maltreatment of one's family, one should have a weapon (M).
- A gun should not be kept in the house (M).
- I do not agree with the information that Cetinje has the highest number of armed assaults (M).

Should children and young people be encouraged to keep a weapon at home?

- Children and young people should in no way be encouraged to keep a weapon at home (All).
- A gun in the house should be well hidden and not mentioned to other family members (this is the opinion of two fathers).

Is there a reason in your opinion that adults should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- Women should never carry a weapon, for they should resolve conflicts with kind words (F).
- One should not carry a gun in his everyday life (F).
- We should not watch action movies either, for they can encourage the use of firearms, and can have an especially negative effect on young people (F).
- For personal security professionals should carry a gun even when they are off duty (two fathers).
- There are reasons for carrying a gun in everyday life, but they personally would not do that (two mothers).
- In my opinion yes (although I do not carry one), because today there are no longer fair fistfights. This is maybe why one should carry a gun. Still, I find that everybody carries a gun, except those who should.
- For personal safety one should carry it (M).

Is there a reason in your opinion that young people should carry a weapon in their daily routine?

- Young people have no reason to carry a gun (All).

What can motivate young people to use firearms?

- There are various motives that lead young people to carry a gun (All).
- One mother thinks that there should be no reason for which young people would use a gun and that she simply cannot imagine any kind of situation. Everything depends on family education, although parents can often do nothing about it, nor can society (F).
- We should have a restrictive legal policy regarding the carrying of firearms, in other words, penalties should be strict for both young people and their parents. He also thinks that there are many motives that induce young people to use guns, and most often it is just the 'wild youth' (M).
- I think that television is a great influence in motivating young people to do various things, and even use guns (M).

- A bigger problem for young people than guns in society is TV programmes of limited educational content (M).
- It is not normal that on excursions young people would rather buy baseball bats than t-shirts, track-suits or other articles in sports shops (F).
- Montenegrin tradition, and hunters use them for hunting (F).
- If my life were at stake, or the life of my family, I would not hesitate to use it in self-defence. Generally I am calm and friendly (F).
- In crisis situations when one's life is at stake, one can only rely upon oneself (M).
- It is good to organize such meetings, for there are even more important topics than this one (M).

What can motivate adults to use weapons?

- Because of politics and the division of Montenegro into Serbs and Montenegrins and when under the influence of drugs and alcohol (M).
- Vendettas, anger, quarrels, lack of tolerance and various other reasons. We could talk about this for two days (M).

4 Evaluation Sheet

(To be completed by the parents)

Have you been able to freely express your opinion during the group discussion?

All respondents said yes.

How did you feel during group discussions?

- Quite well (two respondents).
- I felt uneasy because of the topic.
- At ease (two respondents).
- Useful.

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

- Warm and pleasant.
- Appropriate.
- Frank and appropriate.
- Pleasant (two respondents).
- Normal.
- Good.
- Positive.

Is there something in your opinion that should have been done in a different way?

- Nothing.
- Combine children and parents. I think we would reach a better conclusion if we managed to find out their opinion.
- Everything was tolerable.

Which discussion topic (of those offered) was especially interesting for you?

- The topic related to firearms.
- 'What are the motives for children using guns?'
- Everything was of equal importance.



- Alcohol and drugs, as well as the relationship between students and their parents.
- On average – all topics.
- Motivations for adults to carry guns.

Is there a topic that you would be especially interested in regarding weapons and young people?

- No (two respondents).
- Everything was equally interesting and important.
- Nothing special.
- Life and work at school.
- Legal regulations.

5 Questions for facilitator / co-facilitator

How would you describe the atmosphere during the group discussion?

The atmosphere was tolerant and lively, and only at the beginning of the workshop there was an unpleasant scene, with one mother leaving the workshop because this topic affected her due to a tragic event in the family (her nephew killed his uncle). Afterwards everything went fine.

How did the parents respond to the topics for discussion (the key questions)?

The topic was very well accepted by the parents, as this is something they often think about, and they are worried about the environment their children are growing up in. Only one parent thought that such a topic was not of the greatest importance, but that pedagogues and psychologists have more important issues to raise with parents when it comes to children.

Which question (topic) prompted most discussion during the group conversation?

Questions related to motivation for young people to keep guns at home and to use guns.

Were there questions that were not interesting for group members?

No.

What is the personal impression of the facilitator (co-facilitator) on group dynamics / group interaction?

Everything went perfectly, the atmosphere was good and everybody got a chance to say his bit.

6 General observations

Number of children: 365 (13 classes)

Number of teachers: 22 Full-Time and 7 visiting teachers (from other schools)

Note down the remarks, or else the list of all the observations relevant for understanding the situation and interpretation of the data:

The school pedagogue scheduled the workshop for the children and the one for parents at the same time, so that I held the workshop with the children, and Radoje the one with the parents (who arrived well ahead, so we assumed it would not be ok to tell them to wait for 90 minutes). Also, the pedagogue invited 15 children to the workshop, expecting that some of them might not come (but all were present).

From the interview with the school pedagogue: in the last couple of years there have been no problems with guns, and as far as prevention programmes are concerned there are both arguments in favour of and against such programmes.

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Date: 18.10.2006







ISBN 86-7728-047-2



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